

THE

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OF

LITERATURE AND ART.



Contents.

I. Henry Burnett, Musician (From a photograph)	
	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	PAGE
II. "Dickens and Manchester." By JOHN MORTIMER	99
III. "Dante Gabriel Rossetti in Relation to Dante Alighieri." By WALTER BUTTERWORTH	117
IV. "William H. Davies: Poet and Super-Tramp." By J. J. RICHARDSON	132
V. "The Anonymous in Music." By ROBERT PEEL	152
VI. "Puffs from my Pipe." By ARTHUR W. FOX	168
VII. "Cosas de España." (With an illustration). By GEORGE S. LANCASHIRE	188
VIII. "Selections from a Book of Table Talk." By GEORGE MILNER	199
IX. "A Friendly Apostrophe to Winter": Verses. By CHAS. T. TALLENT-BATEMAN	206

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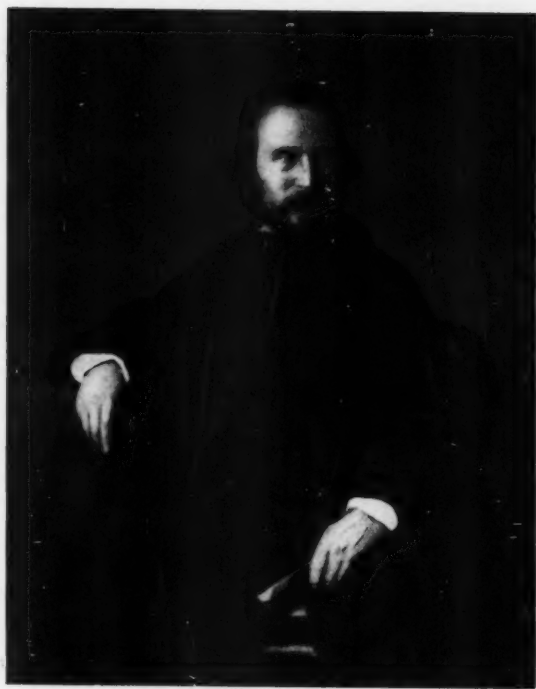
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HENRY BURNETT, Musician.

From a photograph.



DICKENS AND MANCHESTER.

By JOHN MORTIMER.

WAS it Beau Brummell, or another exquisite of his time, who asked if it was fitting for a gentleman of his quality to go to Manchester? Anyhow the incident comes back to one's mind in proceeding to consider the relationships which existed between a great humourist of the last century and this growing Cottonopolis of ours. "I never came to Manchester," said Charles Dickens, "without expecting pleasure, and I never left it without taking pleasure away." Such an avowal of friendliness is very gratifying. Our city is not regarded as an attractive place to the stranger, and it was less so when he knew it, but he never said anything in public in disparagement of the place or its people. It might be the Coketown or Dullborough of fiction, but he never referred to it as "a blighted cinder heap," as one of its modern citizens does. On the other hand he was well affected to us, despite our environment, and even, on one occasion, went the length of saying that he believed we were the greatest people in the world; so it is due to him that we should be as generously responsive. He had a lengthened acquaintance with us which began when he was yet a young man, and ended not long before his death. He made many public appearances here, on platform or stage, as speaker, actor, and reader of his own works. There were other links of association too of a private kind that bound him to us rendering the intimacy closer, and increasing our interest in him now that, a century after his birth, he is finding "resurrection in the minds of men."

It is in accordance with the fitness of things that this revival should meet with some measure of recognition in

the Manchester Literary Club. It may be said that though Dickens has not taken a specially prominent place among its literary gods, he has not been without his worshippers. Among these one's mind instinctively turns, in the first instance, to that ardent admirer of him, Robert Langton. To show, in some degree, the extent of his regard I may repeat some words, of a memorial kind, contributed to the Club's records at the time of his death :

Of all authors Dickens was his supreme favourite. That humourist had no more loving or loyal disciple, and the ardent attachment of the reader to the author was completely responsive and sympathetic. In an examination on Dickens, Langton would have come out easily first. The study of Dickens constituted a sort of literary passion. He had not only read and re-read him, and so committed him largely to memory, but had, in a sense, absorbed him. The days and scenes of his own childhood and youth formed an attractive link. He had been at school at Rochester and Dickens had lived near the old Cathedral city, and had made large use of it in his novels, in "Pickwick," and especially in "Edwin Drood," what more fitting, therefore, than that it should occur to Langton to exercise his pen upon the subject, and produce a paper on "Charles Dickens and Rochester"? But this alone would not suffice; the paper must be illustrated, and not only his pen but his graver must do its share. The sketches were not to be from his own hand, for he had found a willing and sympathetic co-worker in his friend Wm. Hull. Accordingly these kindred spirits, in loving companionship, went down to the old city, and the results of their labours, in this happy pilgrimage, make a delightfully humorous space in the Club's printed Transactions. Langton was never happier than in describing, and reproducing pictorially, these scenes of his youth, and intertwining among them, as with a thread of gold, those associations real and imaginative, which had been conferred upon them through the medium of the great novelist whom he loved and worshipped. The illustrations to this paper are numerous and admirable, the honours being equally divided between artist and engraver. One sketch, however, among them remains unfinished—a story left half-told. Before it could be completed William Hull died, and as Langton says in a postscript to the paper.

the drawing of "Jasper's Gatehouse," relating to "Edwin Drood" remains an unfinished illustration of an unfinished tale As coming events cast their shadows before, so this paper on "Charles Dickens and Rochester" which found favour far and wide—one edition of it being published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall—proved to be the prelude to the *magnum opus* of our friend, and in which work it was to a large extent merged. Writing on Dickens was to Langton an appetite which grew by what it fed on, and the success he had met with encouraged him to further effort, which resulted in "The Childhood and Youth of Charles Dickens." Before its publication he gave the Club, in a short paper, a foretaste of the coming book, and showed us some of the illustrations, of which in the completed work, there were no less than seventy-six by his own hand. In this volume, a labour of love, as he tells us in its preface, and which attained a wide popularity, you have the epitome of the author as one knew him, his simplicity of nature, his gentle humour, his hero-worship, his literary tastes, his artistic powers, his indefatigable zeal, and his truthful exactness. The very notes of exclamation, scattered among the pages and sometimes duplicated, when he announces some more than usually interesting discovery or coincidence, are in themselves eloquent. As an evidence of his minute particularity of description take this example relating to the Cedars at Gad's Hill: "The girth of the largest tree is, at the present time, 16 feet 2 inches below the branches, and it is 86 feet 4 inches from point to point of the largest branches. Each tree covers a circular area of about 80 feet diameter." One seems to see our friend at work as he carefully passes the measuring tape over the trunks and branches. Read in the light of its authorship, and, as a literary tribute laid upon a shrine by a devout worshipper, Langton's book must ever have a claim upon the reverential regard and affection of those who knew him, but, apart from this, it may be said that it has, on its merits, proved a valuable and interesting addition to the bibliography of Charles Dickens.

Another devotee of Dickens, and no less enthusiastic than Langton, was an old friend now departed, William Dinsmore. He helped to compile the most comprehensive narrative available of Dickens's connection with Manchester, in a series of articles contributed to the *Manchester*

Evening Chronicle, in 1902, and embellished with his own illustrations. To that source of information those who are interested may be safely recommended. It is matter for regret that these sketches were not published in book form during the author's life. In the Editor of the paper, at that time, Dinsmore found a congenial sympathiser. He was Mr. J. Cuming Walters, now the editor of the *Manchester City News*, who has distinguished himself in the field of literature relating to Dickens in a very marked degree, for has he not, with the perseverance of a literary sleuth-hound followed on the track of "Edwin Drood," and sought to pluck out the heart of his mystery? Moreover is he not a moving and guiding spirit in the Dickens Fellowship, who has already attained the honour of being for one year president of the central body of that widely-distributed organisation; and have we not before us his latest contribution, dedicated to that fellowship, in the form of a comely volume of penetrative criticism, entitled, "Phases of Dickens: The Man, His Message, and His Mission"?

To revert to an earlier time, and to one who, though he did not write much about Dickens, was delighted to use his fine elocutionary gifts in reading choice selections from that author's writings, is to bring back to recollection a former Secretary of the Club, George Evans, who was, perhaps, never happier than when, on a public platform and before an appreciative audience, he was engaged in reading, say, "Dr. Marigold," or, choicest of all, "The Christmas Carol." What a charm he would have had for the miners of the far west, whom Bret Harte describes as gathered round the camp-fire listening to the story of little Nell!

Charles Dickens was a young man of twenty-six when he first visited Manchester, and we are to imagine him as wearing the handsome appearance which Maclise has given to him in the portrait prefixed to Forster's life of the humourist, and where he is shown with long flowing hair

falling in waves about a fine beardless face, eager-looking and lit up by large and lustrous eyes. "Pickwick" had made him famous, and he was now engaged on "Nicholas Nickleby." Along with John Forster, and at the instance of Harrison Ainsworth, he had come to be introduced to friends of art and letters here, and, as it proved, to take back with him something pleasant in the way of material for two of his best characters in "Nicholas Nickleby," to wit, the Cheeryble Brothers. The Grants, William and Daniel, two of our local men of business, renowned in their own way, apart from any fictional presentation, were undoubtedly the models, but whether studied by Dickens from the life, under conditions of personal contact, or from descriptions by others, has furnished a subject for keen controversy. One of the early enquirers in this direction was Robert Langton, who, in 1886, read a paper to the Club with a view to showing the close connection in fact and fiction between the brothers, but as to the way in which this was accomplished Langton found himself in a difficulty, brought about by the statement of Dickens, in one of his prefaces to "Nicholas Nickleby," that he had never interchanged any communication with the Cheeryble Brothers in his life. Taking Dickens at his word, and without any suspicion of a possible attempt at evasion, he came to the conclusion that they might never have met, and that the portraiture was derived at second-hand. This is not a matter which need trouble us now; for my part, I am inclined to follow the advice of Washington Irving in such things and indulge in a pious belief that they did meet. And here to one's assistance, comes another member of the Club, John Evans, who edited an edition of Canon Parkinson's "Old Church Clock," in which will be found a footnote to this effect:—

During the winter of 1838-9 two comparatively young men came on a visit to Mr. Gilbert Winter and Mr. James Crossley; the one was Mr. Charles Dickens, the other Mr. John Forster. Mr. Gilbert Winter, with his usual hospitality,

gave a dinner party at "The Stocks" Cheetham Hill Road, in honour of the two visitors. Among the company were Messrs. Daniel and William Grant (whom Mr. Dickens then met for the first time, and afterwards immortalised in the "Cheeryble Brothers"), Mr. J. C. Harter, Mr. James Crossley, and Canon Parkinson. One of the party—the only one left—informs the writer there was quite a passage of arms between Mr. Forster and the Canon, in which the somewhat confident cockney wit of the former was completely extinguished by the strong powers of repartee exhibited by his acute and ready Northern antagonist.

Regarding the Grants, about whose real life there was so much that was, in its way, romantic, it is not to the purpose to say anything here. All that it is possible to learn about them may be found in "The Story of the Cheeryble Grants," by the Rev. W. Hume Elliott, a volume of great interest, displaying painstaking research, and dedicated to the members of the Dickens Fellowship. That old warehouse of theirs in Cannon Street which came to be known as "Cheeryble House," has been demolished, but the house in Mosley Street, in which David Grant lived, still remains, devoted now to commercial uses. Daniel was still living there when Queen Victoria came to visit Manchester in 1851, and he made a fine show of loyalty on the occasion of which, in one expression of it, the *Manchester Guardian* said:—

The illuminations and decorations in front of the gentleman's house were as splendid as they were tasteful. The whole front of the house from roof to basement was one blaze of light from innumerable variegated oil lamps.

Among these was an equestrian statue of the Queen, which Langton tells us was painted by an old member of the Manchester Literary Club, Mr. George Hayes.

Not long after this first visit, when Dickens felt disposed to come to Manchester again, no doubt it would be as the guest of his sister Fanny, and her husband, Henry Burnett, who had taken up their abode there, and were

residing at 3, Elm Terrace, Higher Ardwick. To that house indeed he did come on the occasion of his first public appearance in Manchester, which was in October, 1843, when he gave an address in the Free Trade Hall, at a soirée held there in support of the Manchester Athenæum. His sister Fanny, we are told, it was who induced him to come. In some reminiscences of Richard Cobden, who was at the soirée, Sir Edward Watkin tells how, on the night previous, he went, along with Samuel Giles, and another friend, to meet Dickens at his sister's house, and make arrangements for the opening address. A youth in livery admitted them, and, in the drawing-room they were introduced to Dickens, who was standing with one hand on the chimney-piece. In welcoming them he offered wine, and, in passing the decanter, upset his own glass and deluged a very pretty book lying on the table. The Mr. Samuel Giles mentioned here, we are told, was a brother of Mr. William Giles, one of Dickens's early schoolmasters, and I think I am not wrong in saying that he was afterwards the author of a notable series of articles which appeared in the *Manchester City News* descriptive of the rise and progress of the principal home trade warehouses in the city.

In being permitted to deliver the Athenæum address Dickens was pleased to think that thus had been conferred upon him one of the highest honours, and of the outcome his biographer says:—

Here he spoke mainly on a matter nearest his heart, the education of the very poor. He protested against the danger of calling a little learning dangerous; declared his preference for the very least over none at all; prepared to propose to substitute for the old a new doggerel,

Though house and lands he never got

Learning can give what they can *not*;

told his listeners of the real and permanent danger we had lately taken Longfellow to see, in the nightly refuges of London, thousands of immortal creatures condemned, without alteration or choice, to tread not what our great poet

calls the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire, but one of jagged flints and stones laid down by brutal ignorance, and contrasted this with the unspeakable consolation and blessings that a little knowledge had shed on men of the lowliest estate and most helpless means, watching the stars with Ferguson, the shepherd's boy, walking the streets with Crabbe, a poor barber here in Lancashire with Arkwright, a tallow chandler's son with Franklin, shoe-making with Blomfield in his garret, following the plough with Burns, and high above the noise of looms and hammers, whispering courage in the ears of workers I could this day name in Sheffield and Manchester.

Perhaps of equal, if not greater, interest to some of us, in the matter of this address, it is to know that while he was in Manchester to deliver it the idea first occurred to him of writing "The Christmas Carol." Here again was one of the pleasant things he took away with him. Forster tells us that though the idea only came to him in October the story was finished before the end of November, and, says his biographer,

I can testify to the accuracy of his own account of what befell him in its composition; with what a strange mastery it seized him for itself, how he wept over it, and laughed and wept again, and excited himself to an extraordinary degree, and how he walked thinking of it fifteen and twenty miles about the bleak streets of London many and many a night after all sober folks had gone to bed.

It would perhaps have pleased him to know that, after he was gone, as sure as ever the season of Christmas came round the public reading of his Carol would be an essential part of it, and nowhere to be greeted with more undying acceptance than in the city where the idea of it was conceived. Never, surely, did there come from Cockaigne any carol more welcome than this.

It was four years after the Athenæum address before he appeared in Manchester again, and then as an amateur stage manager and actor, and for a very worthy and benevolent

purpose, part of the proceeds being intended for the relief of Leigh Hunt. For a detailed account of the production, in the Theatre Royal, of Ben Jonson's comedy of "Every Man in His Humour"; "A Good Night's Rest," and "Turning the Tables," in all of which Dickens appeared, and for contemporary criticisms thereon, I must again refer the enquirer to those *Manchester Evening Chronicle* articles, where he may read how well, among other achievements, Dickens acquitted himself in the character of Captain Bobadil, and where also a pictured representation of him as the fantastic Captain, reproduced by Dinsmore, may be seen. A nice little sum of money was raised by this means, which would doubtless be acceptable to the impecunious Hunt, and the recollection of the beneficent act may have helped to soothe his mind in its soreness when, subsequently, he found that Dickens had used him for the evolution of that undesirable character Harold Skimpole. At subsequent dates he came here with his strolling players, on charitable purposes intent, the old Free Trade Hall and afterwards the new one being brought into requisition for stage purposes. It was on the day following one of these performances, September 2nd, 1852, that he took part in the inaugural ceremony in connection with the opening of the Manchester Free Library in Campfield. He seemed always ready to avail himself of an opportunity of coming before us, and this is displayed in his response to the invitation. In an almost eager way he says he has great pleasure in accepting it, and adds: "My engagements are very numerous, but the occasion is too important and the example too noble to admit of hesitation." The occasion, to some of us, is memorable by reason of the part which dear old Thackeray played in it. There were three distinguished speakers, Thackeray, Dickens and Lytton. Thackeray had made special preparation and considered himself quite equal to the task. He induced his friend Fields, the American publisher, to go down with

him, and on the way discoursed confidently on his coming triumph as a speaker. He was going to be eloquent, he was going to beat Dickens and the rest, and he would have Fields in front of him so that he should have the full force of his magic eloquence; but, alas! for the sequel, says his friend,

As he rose he gave me a half wink under his spectacles as if to say 'Now for it; the others have done well, but I will show 'em a grace beyond the reach of their art.' He began in a clear and charming manner, and was absolutely perfect for three minutes. In the middle of a most earnest and elaborate sentence he suddenly stopped, gave a look of comic despair at the ceiling, crammed both hands into his trousers pockets and deliberately sat down. Everybody seemed to understand that it was one of Thackeray's unfinished speeches, and there were no signs of surprise or discontent among the audience. He continued to sit on the platform in a perfectly composed manner, and when the meeting was over he said to me without a sign of discomfiture, 'My boy you have my profoundest sympathy; this day you have accidentally missed hearing one of the finest speeches ever composed for delivery by a great British orator.' And I never heard him mention the subject again.

At the evening meeting, however, he retrieved the situation by delivering a neat and complete little speech with the true Thackeray flavour in it. One wonders whether Dickens was reminded by Thackeray's breakdown of a similar breakdown by Washington Irving ten years before. Dickens was then in New York, and a banquet was held in honour of him, over which "Geoffrey Crayon" presided. Irving, who was not a good or willing after dinner speaker, was possessed by a foreboding that he would fail in proposing the health of the distinguished guest, which accordingly came to pass. After stammering out a few sentences, he gave it up and concluded with the words of the toast, "Charles Dickens, the guest of the nation." At Campfield Dickens was quite at his ease, and delivered his speech with grace and humour, but somehow one's

sympathy goes out to that other humourist who could not find utterance for the thoughts within him.

In December of the same year as the Campfield speech, Dickens was in Manchester again to talk about Mechanics' Institutes with all the fervour of one who had been converted from a prejudice against them to a perfect faith in their educational virtues, and possibilities for social good, and with effects from his oratory which were charming both to his audience and himself.

When Dickens had determined to try his fortune as a reader of his own works he came in due season to Manchester, and was amazed at his reception. It was just after his separation from his wife. He says in a letter :—

When I came to Manchester on Saturday, I found seven hundred stalls taken! When I went into the room at night 2,500 people had paid, and more were being turned away from every door. The welcome they gave me was astounding in its affectionate recognition of the late trouble, and fairly for once unmanned me. I never saw such a sight, or heard such a sound. When they had thoroughly done it, they settled down to enjoy themselves, and certainly they did enjoy themselves to the last minute.

Of another reading he says :—

Copperfield in the Free Trade Hall, last Saturday, was really a grand scene.

And once again :—

Such a prodigious demonstration last night at Manchester, that I was obliged (contrary to my principle in such cases) to go back.

It was natural that having come under the spell of this creative spirit in literature, considerable curiosity should be aroused as to the bodily form in which it was enshrined, and doubtless the desire to see Dickens in the flesh constituted at least half the attractive force which drew people to his entertainments. I know that it preponderated in

one's own case, because after hearing him, while retaining a tolerably clear impression of the reader, one has absolutely no recollection of what it was he read. One is conscious also of having experienced a sense of disillusionment, such as that, say, which an urchin may have at the sight of the man, hitherto hidden away, who has controlled the characters and incidents of a Punch and Judy show. The brisk alert gentleman, with the bright, businesslike face, and the moustache and goatee beard depending therefrom, differed very disappointingly from the Dickens which his novels had shaped in the imagination. But here I prefer to give the impression made upon one writer in the *Sphinx*, who is dealing with one of the humourist's last readings in Manchester, which were given in October, 1868. Though I was a member of the staff of that paper at the time I am not aware who was the writer. In the course of his description he says:—

The Free Trade Hall was only two-thirds full. But the audience atoned for its numerical deficiency by its intelligence and respectability Mr. Dickens has a most disappointing appearance. Nearly all great men have. Their presence nearly always disappoints one Mr. Dickens's appearance is not only not equal to his exaggerated reputation, it is not equal to the real reputation which his genius deserves. In his "American Notes" he himself asserts the disappointment of a gentleman on beholding his ideal in the flesh; but he endeavours to explain it on the grounds of holland costume and mosquito bites. The cause lies deeper than mosquitoes can penetrate. It is not Mr. Dickens's fault, and therefore it is no censure of him not to blink the fact that his appearance is not equal to his genius. One cannot conceive that the man at the red velvet reading desk is the author of the favourite novels of the world. That Dickens the Reader is Dickens the Writer, one could almost disbelieve. It is impossible to imagine it; it can only be thrust upon the mind as a fact We think his works will always have less influence on most of his readers, after they have seen him than they had before. To say that no one has any idea of the power of his writings until they hear him read them is preposterous.

The readings on this occasion were "Dr. Marigold" and the famous trial of Bardell and Pickwick. After criticising Dickens's rendering of "Dr. Marigold," which the writer does not like, and saying that the trial scene was capitally rendered, he sums up in this way:—

To ourselves personally, Mr. Dickens's readings are bitter experiences. We think they must be such to everyone who reads his works with a genuine and independent appreciation. There is about them such a grace and charm, that one's ideal of them cannot, in the nature of things be realised. Any attempt to set them on any sort of a stage must necessarily end in disappointment. To us it is more than disappointment. It is positive pain. We not only feel that our ideals are being mutilated, but that their beauty is destroyed to us beyond repair. It is as though they are dying. When first we beheld Mr. Dickens we were as rudely shocked as if a bucket of water had been emptied on our head. The spell was broken; the charm was dissolved. And when we heard him read, his works became to us lost books. The delight of them was cut out of our life. They have no magic in them now; and their pathos is gone for ever.

If I may be allowed to conclude on a personal note, I should like to say that in tracing my acquaintance with Dickens to its source I am carried back to a Dissenting Chapel in Rusholme Road, and to a period in the declining forties of the last century. I was then a Sunday scholar in the school attached to the chapel, and, having matriculated in a lesser chapel for children in a region below, I was called upon to hear sermons of a more serious length and style, and to this end found myself occupying a seat in a lofty gallery, now demolished, which was raised above the lower one in the rear of the sanctuary, and set apart for Sunday scholars. To this high place, on Sunday mornings, we youngsters were conducted. The impression that remains is that we were a very uneasy and restless flock, who, in our impatient waiting for the hour of release, shifted about in our seats, and shuffled our feet to the frequent disturbance of the worshippers below, thereby

bringing upon ourselves, at times, remonstrances of a gentle kind from the genial minister who occupied the pulpit. It was the singing, perhaps, which afforded most relief to us, though that became questionable when it was expressive of words which told how heaven was a place,

Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end.

There was no organ; and the concord of sweet sounds that came from below was entirely vocal. Had one been older it would have been very interesting to have known that blended therewith, and coming from the choir in the singing pew, were the voices of Fanny Burnett, the eldest sister of Charles Dickens, and her husband Henry Burnett. Fanny had gone to join the choir invisible, however, before one was made aware of this. If a further digression is permissible, it would be to say that during the sermon one would fain have slept, but that, under watchful eyes, was out of the question. More fortunate was that well-known local wit in after years, John Fox Turner, who, as a youngster, sat in a more favoured seat below. He has told how, on a drowsy summer morning he found himself there for the first time, and how, listening to a sermon from good Pastor Griffin on "The Woman of Samaria," sweet sleep slid into his soul, and how he was prevented from taking headers into space by the restraining hand of pretty Emma Leonard. He seems to have been a precocious youth, for he says that in his wakeful moments he found himself wondering whether the deacons kept rabbits in the lower part of the high pulpit, and whether Mrs. Griffin would be jealous of the worthy pastor's admiration for the subject of his discourse. No better portrait, however, of the minister of those days has been given than that of "J.F.T." in his recollections. The spare figure clad in the Geneva gown, the tender, almost womanly face, thin, and marked with thoughtful lines, the beaming spectacled eyes, raying off light, "as of sunshine on melon

frames," the soft persuasive voice, and sweet reasonableness of argument, with occasional flashes of emotional protest against wrong-doing, which showed that there was a strong soul within that frail-looking body, are all happily expressive outlines of one's own youthful impression of the pastor. I have thought it well to introduce this description of him inasmuch as he exercised a very powerful influence over those two notable members of his congregation, and when, in after years, he wrote his "Memories of the Past," he had much to say about them that is of special interest now. In the light of this and other knowledge, acquired in connection with "The Old Chapel," it is curious to reflect that while seated in that upper gallery one was, unconsciously, almost in touch with those who should figure so prominently, in ways real and imaginary, in life and literature, and in some of these forms should enter into one's own life. In Fanny Burnett one was to recognise the little sister, two years his senior, who trotted with Dickens about the little garden at Portsea, and who afterwards went to the Royal Academy of Music, and while a student there walked frequently with her brother to visit the prison where their father was confined for debt. It was at the Academy of Music that she met with Henry Burnett, and Pastor Griffin tells how, after their marriage, when they had come to Manchester as teachers of music, they found their way, by accident as it was, to his chapel, and how they had become very deeply interested in it and with what an amount of spiritual fervour they entered into its religious life. Very saint-like, indeed, does Fanny appear to have been, as she is revealed to us, in his own delicately-appreciative way, by the worthy pastor, to whom she became deeply attached as her spiritual guide. To him they told the story of their lives, and from this we learn, concerning Burnett, that in his youth he was regarded as possessing precocious powers of voice, and "was noticed in musical parties in Brighton as a distinguished young singer," and how, at about ten years of

age, he was introduced under the patronage of the organist of the Chapel Royal to the Pavilion, and remembered well "standing on a table in the drawing-room at the Pavilion to sing a 'solo' before the Court, and seeing George IV, who was suffering with gout, wheeled into the room, covered with flannels and bandages from head to foot." Later, with his fine voice, he went upon the stage in opera, "and easily met with engagements at Covent Garden and Drury Lane." And we are told how Braham, the great tenor singer, used to say, "If I can't come send for Burnett; he will do as well." Elsewhere we read that before he settled in Manchester, Mr. Burnett appeared occasionally in opera at the old Theatre Royal in Fountain Street, and met with a capital reception. From the operatic stage to a singing pew in a Dissenting chapel was a curious transition at that time. But Pastor Griffin tells how husband and wife offered their services to the congregation without reward, and these, being accepted, how they selected some six or eight persons with capable voices to join them, and with what success.

"Mrs. Burnett's voice," he says, "was one of great power and brilliancy. Mr. Burnett's likewise, was a voice of much compass and volume when exerted in its strength, and with more flexibility, capable of more variety and richness of modulation, than hers; blended in unison, whether in duet or in chorus, the effect was most charming. But in public worship it was the devotional influence which it seemed to carry along with it that rendered it so peculiarly delightful to us all; for it was truly a 'service of song to the Lord.'"

The health of the fair singer was frail, and in about eight years after coming to Manchester Fanny Burnett died of consumption in London, where she had gone to consult a physician. Forster tells us of the deep grief of Dickens at this event, and of a letter he got from him full of heart-break concerning it. In connection with it Pastor Griffin says:—

On the death of our beloved friend, I went up to London in compliance with her dying request, to officiate at her

funeral. Her grave was selected in a secluded and picturesque nook in Highgate Cemetery. All the male members of her family attended. To me it could not be other than a peculiarly solemn and affecting occasion. Mr. Dickens appeared to feel it very deeply. He spoke to me in terms of great respect and affection for his departed sister—he had always so spoken of her—as I accompanied him in his brougham on my way to my brother's house. His behaviour to myself was most courteous and kind.

Until he left Manchester, some ten or eleven years later, Burnett was a familiar figure about the old chapel, and one remembers him as a tall, handsome man, who wore a long cloak, and about whose appearance there was a touch of the romantic. One remembers also the interest he took in the singing in the Sunday school, and how he would compose tunes for some of the hymns, the music of which still vibrates in the memory. Dickens was on good terms with his brother-in-law, and is said to have introduced some features of him in creating Nicholas Nickleby. Doubtless he would often visit the family in Elm Terrace and in Upper Brook Street, where they afterwards resided. To stay with them at one of these houses came the father and mother of Dickens, to remain with them, as Pastor Griffin tells us, for many months. He says:—

We had much intercourse with them. They constantly attended our place of worship; and appeared to be much interested in the new character and new associations of their daughter.

It gave an added interest to the old chapel when one came to know that the originals of Mr. Micawber and Mrs. Nickleby had sat in one of the pews. When Fanny Burnett died she left behind her two sons, one a little deformed boy, who is said to have been born in Upper Brook Street, and who did not long survive her. Of him Pastor Griffin says:—

The little deformed child, Harry, was a singular child—meditative and quaint in a remarkable degree. He was the

original, as Mr. Dickens told his sister, of little "Paul Dombey." Harry had been taken to Brighton, as "little Paul" is represented to have been, and had there, for hours lying on the beach with his books, given utterance to thoughts quite as remarkable for a child as those which are put into the lips of Paul Dombey He died in the arms of a dear, dear nephew of mine since passed away, John Griffin.

In that dear nephew, in whose arms the original of little Paul Dombey died, I recognise, if I am not much mistaken, one of those at whose feet I sat for religious instruction in that far-away time; at any rate it pleases me to indulge in the pious belief that it was so.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI IN RELATION TO DANTE ALIGHIERI.

By WALTER BUTTERWORTH.

THE recent exhibition of drawings and paintings by Rossetti in the Manchester City Art Gallery, including a number in which the subjects are drawn from the works of Dante, has led me to express a few thoughts upon the influence exercised by the older poet upon the modern painter and poet.

I shall make but brief references to Rossetti's poems and will speak rather of his pictures, as so many of the originals have been available in the city for study.

The Rossetti household was saturated with Dante lore and tradition. The father, Gabriel, a patriot and exile, was a Dante scholar, the writer of "*Il Comento Analitico sulla Divina Comedia*" and other works in which he treated Beatrice as an abstraction—a medium for political and theological theories. His house was the resort of writers, patriots, scholars and politicians. The Italian influence was very apparent under these conditions and often in the discussions Dante Alighieri was a central figure, made to suggest many an ingenious application to modern problems, and disquisitions on the past.

All the children, Maria Francesca, Dante Gabriel, William Michael, and Christina Georgina were destined to make the great poet and his works the subject of their own writings, yet at first they were repelled by one whom they regarded as a dry-as-dust.

We get a glimpse of this in a passage from an essay by Helen Rossetti, the daughter of William:—

From their earliest infancy the Rossetti's had grown up in a Dantesque atmosphere, one of the most familiar spectacles

of their childhood being the figure of their father poring over the works of the great Florentine, writing notes and commentaries. Indeed so heavy and musty were the volumes old Rossetti delighted in, so copious and minute his notes, that in early childhood the name of Dante Alighieri was rather a terror than a delight to his children—the "*Convito*" being regarded as the very essence of unreadable dullness.

But as Gabriel and his brother and sisters grew up, they too were destined to fall under the spell of the divine poet, and to Dante Gabriel, both as painter and as poet, Alighieri was a never-failing source of inspiration. He was but little in sympathy with his father's theories and elaborate interpretations; the sublime poetry, the superhuman imagination which could grasp at once heaven and hell and the whole universe, appealed to him; he cared little about theological or astronomical discussions or disputes, nor did he trouble himself as to the precise circumstances under which Dante's stationary foot was always the lowest when ascending the mountain whence Virgil bade him retrace his steps, nor what that much-disputed mountain may have been.

Personally I cannot trace much evidence of influence upon Rossetti from the sublime side of Dante's mind. It is not very apparent in his poetry, his designs, or his paintings. With few exceptions, his Dante themes were drawn from the "*Vita Nuova*," where love is the all-pervading theme, expressed with the utmost delicacy, refined and idealized in an atmosphere of transcendentalism.

The two great men were wide apart in nature and endowments, having little in common when their powers had matured. Yet in youth there was affinity between them. Both had intellectual powers of the highest order; both were subtle and sensitive in their speculations; both had a superlative capacity for expressing their conceptions in beautiful form; both enriched the world with imaginative and deeply sincere works.

We are reminded of the poems of Milton's young manhood—of an exceeding choiceness, purity and nobility. His "*Comus*" and the other early poems came straight

from the conviction that "he ought himself to be a true poem if he hoped to write one." Milton, like Dante, was to be vexed and harassed by the cares of public life; but first they enjoyed a halcyon period of youthful fervour and idealizing, of virginal freshness, when in their early works they platonized and philosophised with beauty of feeling and expression. "Such poetry carries the mind beyond and above the beaten dusty walks of ordinary life, lifts it into a purer element, and breathes into it generous emotion."

It was this early phase of Dante to which Rossetti felt naturally drawn and he was wont to make designs from the "*Vita Nuova*," just as William Blake delighted to draw his conceptions of the figures in "*Comus*," both human and spiritual.

As we might expect, Blake eagerly followed his own bent, remote from the life of flesh and blood; Rossetti's constant theme was love, idealized and refined in the early days, sensuous and full-blooded afterwards.

The allusion to Blake is only made because he was fired by the pure beauty of Milton's early work as Rossetti was by the similar work (in spirit) of Dante; and both translated the themes of the earlier poets by means of the graphic arts. It is tempting to digress at the thought that these two men of genius, Blake and Rossetti, are by far the highest examples in our history of the possession of rare powers in art and literature; or as I would prefer to express it—in the arts of literature and graphic design.

Probably the nearest parallel to them in other lands would be Michel Angelo, but his consummate genius expressed itself chiefly in the closely allied arts of painting, sculpture and architecture, and though his poetry is big with thought and rugged force, it was relatively slight and incidental.

Both Blake and Rossetti were in the fullest sense poets and designers, the one boldly imaginative and visionary,

a child of nature; the other sensuous, sensitive, the product of romanticism and mediaevalism.

Although Rossetti displayed early promise as an artist and was regarded by his parents as destined to become a painter, his earliest works of importance were literary. From seventeen to twenty-one years of age he sedulously translated the "*Vita Nuova*" along with Dante's sonnets and lyrics, and those of his predecessors and contemporaries—though they were not published until 1861. In these years he haunted the reading-room of the British Museum, hunting up the poems of the early Italians, and tentatively translating also from the German of Hartman von Aue, the "*Niebelungenlied*," Burger and others.

He found himself exactly suited, at this time, with the "*Vita Nuova*." As he himself said, it is "a book which only youth could have produced and which must chiefly remain sacred to the young; to each of whom the figure of Beatrice, less life-like than love-like, will seem the friend of his own heart."

Holman Hunt, whose friendship he made about this time describes him as "possessed, alike in his poetry and painting, with an appreciation of beauty of the most intense quality."

It is not strange that this ardent young poet should become enraptured with the "*Vita Nuova*,"—with Dante the "silent and awe-struck lover"; with Beatrice, who "lived in heaven with the angels and on earth with his soul,"—who was "the enemy of all disquiet," and who, to apply the words of Homer "seemed not to be the daughter of a mortal man, but of God."

Rossetti's translation of this work is singularly felicitous and could hardly have emanated from any other Englishman or Italian, however versed in both tongues. He was of Italian blood in the main, with some admixture of English. He was born and bred in England. He was a true poet, translating poetry of a very pure and subtle kind, which appealed to him in the most poignant sense

when he was on the threshold of manhood. As Knight says:—

A man with a mind more in accord with what is mystic and transcendental in these poems than Rossetti possessed, is not often to be encountered. When to this requirement are added a metrical power and a command of rhyme altogether exceptional, an irrepressible enthusiasm for the subject, and a keen sympathy with what is individual in many of the utterances,—gifts all of which Rossetti possessed, a combination of essentials not likely to be found again in another man is offered.

Italian, moreover—even the Italian of the 13th and 14th centuries, offered little difficulty to Rossetti, who also delighted in the exercise of intellect involved in the search after rhyming equivalents in English to a language offering such facilities for versification as the Italian. However, it remains doubtful whether any but a lover so exceptionally endowed as Rossetti, and so enamoured of womanhood as to be able to assign to a mistress, real or imagined, raptures, sincere or artificial, with which he might be called upon to deal, would have had the patience to translate the whole work.

Before turning to Rossetti's artistic work upon Dante themes, in which also he was often a translator, though in the terms of another art, I would again say that the stern and sublime elements of Dante lay outside Rossetti's range. Their natures differed profoundly. If that "temper of wonder, reverence and awe" of which Mr. Watts Dunton speaks, was common to both, in youth,—if Rossetti then shared the great Italian's pure idealism and spiritual voyaging, he diverged and developed later in a manner almost wholly alien to Dante.

His literary style also was never Dantesque. Delicate, searching, close-fitting, resourceful in these translations, it lacked Dante's terseness, compactness, weight and clarity. In later poems it became exotic, vague and sometimes obscure; and even in the greatest of the sonnets, the greatness was not that of Dante; it was the outcome of his deepest feeling and found its own expression.

By the time he was twenty-one he had accomplished not only his translations and some important poems such as "My Sister's Sleep" and "The Blessed Damozel" (a subject he was to paint long afterwards), but had also produced his "Girlhood of Mary Virgin."

This painting appeals to all by its lovely simplicity and homeliness of feeling. His mother and sister sat for St. Anna and the Virgin; they are engaged in a domestic employment, and quietness pervades their gestures, attitudes, expression; they are peaceful as Quakeresses. The quaint child-angel, sheathed in red wings, is like a flower disclosed to the sunshine as the leaves unfold. The lamp, the lily, the books, the flowers in a glass, the dove, are naïvely and primitively introduced, heightening the feeling of innocence. And the colours, red, blue, green, grey, add yet again to the sense of primitive simplicity.

Rossetti used to make little jokes about this early effort, but long afterwards he wrote about it rather wistfully: "I assure you, it quite surprised me (and shamed me a little), to see what I did fifteen years ago, when I was twenty."

When twenty-two he exhibited his painting "Ecce Ancilla Domini." Here again his sister Christina sat for the Virgin. It would be difficult to say whether the angel or Mary was the more pure,—in treatment direct and untrammelled by any accretion of tradition. The picture is very earnest and simple, and is an exquisitely felt symphony of greys and whites, with delicate passages of deeper colour in the red embroidery, the golden haloes and the blues of the sky and the curtain.

I allude to these two paintings because they were the outcome of the same period as the translations from the Italian,—the time of youthful ardency, sweet seriousness, of simplicity linked with high endeavour.

From this time for many years he did not exhibit his works publicly. He was wounded at being misunderstood

and in some degree neglected. But it was already evident to a few discriminating minds that he had marked power to quicken his subjects with spiritual meaning and to give an intense character to them.

From the beginning to the end his works were surcharged with poetry and imagination, and matter-of-fact people turned away with distaste from pictures which they regarded as fantastic, queer or whimsical.

Probably his shrinking from the pain of public exhibition and the jargon of critics who were utterly unsympathetic increased his natural tendency to select mediæval subjects and to cultivate a kind of dreamland, far away from actuality.

In any event there ensued in his semi-retirement a long succession of sketches, studies, portrait-heads, drawings and rich little water-colours, all proceeding from the stress and fervour of his temperament. Many of them, the earliest particularly, are drawn from the "*Vita Nuova*" and other Dante sources. Others are from Arthurian legends and mediæval traditions. Some of the Dante subjects adhere most closely to the ideas of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, of which at the time he was a member. They set a high intellectual standard in choice of subject, are instinct with lofty feeling, are filled with patient significant detail and are largely independent of academic formulæ.

I may mention as an example the design of "Dante drawing the Angel" on the first anniversary of the death of Beatrice, as related so tenderly in the "*Vita Nuova*." This drawing is far from faultless: the upright man's face is like an artificial mask and Dante's posture is awkward, though his air of having been startled from abstraction back to mundane things is well observed. The curious and crowded detail is very expressive of Rossetti's ideas and symbolism.

Another instance is "Dante drawing an Angel in memory of Beatrice" (earliest Dantesque design, in pen

and ink), water-colour, 1853, "Vita Nuova." The passage runs:

On that day which fulfilled the year since my lady had been made of the citizens of eternal life, remembering me of her as I sat alone, I betook myself to draw the resemblance of an angel upon certain tablets. And while I did this, chancing to turn my head, I perceived that some were standing beside me to whom I should have given courteous welcome, and that they were observing what I did. Also I learned afterwards that they had been there awhile before I perceived them. Perceiving whom, I arose for salutation, and said, "Another was with me."

Or, take again the "Giotto painting the Portrait of Dante" as an example of the equipoise in Rossetti of the artistic and poetic gifts; it is a splendid example of his adroit faculty for illustration and use of literary subjects.

Giotto is shown painting the head of Dante on the wall of the Bargello. It is the well-known head discovered in 1839 by Seymour Kirkup. Cimabue stands behind Giotto and Cavalcanti, holding a book by Guinicelli, is behind Dante, who is watching Beatrice pass in a church procession. This intricate subject is deftly treated in illustration of Purgatory XI.

Credette Cimabue nella pittura
Tener lo campo; ed ora ha Giotto il grido,
Sì che la fama di colui oscura.
Così ha tolto l'uno all'altro Guido
La gloria della lingua; e forse è nato
Chi l'uno e l'altro caccerà del nido.

A triptych was to have been made of this drawing, the side panels to show Dante first as Prior, banishing the party-chiefs from Florence; and again in exile at the court of Can Grande,—the subject which Dante treated in verse in his "Dante at Verona." These panels were never executed.

Most of these early drawings,—whether the exquisitely pure line drawings in pencil or pen and ink, or the water-

colours, are to be classed with his best work. Even the faulty ones are often intense, exalted, romantic. His designs and pictorial ideas are poetic, as his poetry is sensuous and picturesque. Both are imaginative, but became in later work languorous and cloying,—artificially wrought and lacking in freshness. In the early water-colours their freshness and frank colour are delightful qualities, though sometimes the colours are applied arbitrarily. The plein-airists, luminists, pointillists, impressionists and futurists of subsequent days have pitched their tents in other fields and have had little or nought in common with him.

Quite a series of the drawings illustrate the salutations of Beatrice, on earth and in the terrestrial Paradise.

Dante tells of what surpassing virtue her salutation was to him. "When she appeared in any place it seemed to me, by the hope of her excellent salutation, that there was no man mine enemy any longer; and such warmth of charity came upon me that most certainly in that moment I would have pardoned whosoever had done me an injury."

Rossetti often recurred to this subject, using it separately and in a diptych, and always with feeling. One of the versions in the Gallery is that belonging to our fellow-townsmen, Dr. Lloyd Roberts. They are all emotional but are apt to be sad and abstracted. It is almost a general characteristic of Rossetti that his women are joyless, distraught, grave, even dejected.

He follows Dante in his frequent introduction of music, as in the drawing just mentioned, where Beatrice is accompanied by angels playing musical instruments.

After the translations of the "*Vita Nuova*" and the early Italian poems, Rossetti increasingly had recourse to the "*Divina Commedia*" for subjects to paint. The habit became a fixed one to the end of his life, though many of the later pictures and their replicas were single figures of women, shewing little of the eager enthusiasm and close study of early work.

A signal exception to this tendency was *Francesca da Rimini*, which he painted in water-colours in 1861. It was natural that the throbbing love-story of Paolo and Francesca should appeal to him. The passage chosen for illustration is:—

One day we read for pastime and sweet cheer,
 Of Lancelot, how he found love tyrannous.
 We were alone and without any fear,
 Our eyes were drawn together reading thus,
 Full oft, and still our cheeks would pale and glow;
 But one sole point it was that conquered us.
 For when we read of that great lover, how,
 He kissed the smile which he had longed to win—
 Then he who nought can sever from me now
 For ever, kissed my mouth, all quivering.

It is the loveliest of all his water-colours. Exquisite in feeling. Pure yet passionate. Fate makes the instantaneous movement of the lovers instinctive and inevitable. The arts are wedded in this small masterpiece, for while Dante's supreme love-story, or the culminating moment of it, is unmarred, it is also faultlessly told in the language of colour and of design. The reds and greens, with a little yellow and blue are modulated in subtlest shades, yet glow throughout. Few modern pictures sing so passionately in the language of colour.

The artist made a triptych of the Paolo and Francesca subject, using the kiss for one compartment, for another the spirits of the lovers driven by the whirlwind, and in the central space the poets Virgil and Dante.

A subject which recurred often to Rossetti, and of which he made sketches and drawings for nearly a quarter of a century, was Dante at the bier of Beatrice, or as it is now commonly termed: "*Dante's Dream.*" These various studies culminated in 1880 in the large oil-painting—(the largest he ever did)—which is now in the Liverpool Gallery.

The gentleman who commissioned the work wanted it

to occupy a space over a fire-place. Rossetti forgot to allow for the frame and painted the canvas too large. Eventually he made a replica, on a smaller scale and the big work happily came into the possession of the Liverpool Corporation.

The literary nature of many of Rossetti's subjects for pictures sometimes prevents a full enjoyment or understanding of them until the passage illustrated has been studied. "Dante's Dream" is an instance of this. The subject is concentrated in the following lines:—

Then love spoke thus : " Now all shall be made clear ;
Come and behold our lady where she lies."
These idle phantasies
Then carried me to see my lady dead,
And standing at her head
Her ladies put a white veil over her ;
And with her was such very humbleness
That she appeared to say, " I am at peace."

But it is desirable to read the whole of the very noble and almost apocalyptic description of Dante's dream that Beatrice had died. It occurs in the "Vita Nuova" and as is usual in that work, is first told in prose and then wrought into poetry, as a sculptor carves his marble into fairer and nobler form.

Despite technical faults which Rossetti found it difficult to avoid in his large paintings, this masterpiece is grand, solemn, imaginative and deeply felt. The moment chosen is that of which Dante says:—

Now hearken how much Love did honour her,
I myself saw him in his proper form
Bending above the motionless sweet dead.

The young Dante is led by Love to the bier on which the body of Beatrice lies. Two maidens hold over it a pall, strewn with flowers, as the floor is with poppies. The feeble flame of a lamp flickers before expiring. Through the windows are seen buildings of the city of

Florence. Scarlet birds wing their way to carry the tidings of death. The figure of Love is clad in the colour of flame; the poet in sombre garments; the maidens in green. In colour, in design, in feeling, in imaginative insight the work is great and though the artist damaged the painting by retouchings and changes (especially the changing of the colour of Beatrice's hair from dark to light), it has a message of intense emotional power.

Rossetti added two predellas to his smaller version, representing Dante lying upon a couch, first seeing the sad vision and then telling it to certain gentlewomen.

Another picture suggested by the same incident in the "*Vita Nuova*," but more poignantly the outcome of his own personal grief, is Beata Beatrice. There is a letter from Rossetti which describes the picture with precision :

The picture illustrates the "*Vita Nuova*" embodying symbolically the death of Beatrice as treated in that work. The picture is not intended at all to represent death, but to render it under the semblance of a trance, in which Beatrice, seated at a balcony overlooking the city, is suddenly rapt from earth to heaven.

You will remember how Dante dwells on the desolation of the city in connection with the incident of her death, and for this reason I have introduced it as my background and made the figures of Dante and Love passing through the street and gazing ominously at one another, conscious of the event; while a third, a messenger of death, drops the poppy between the hands of Beatrice. She through her shut lids, is conscious of a new world.

Rossetti first painted this picture in 1863, in memory of his wife, who had died the year before, and of whom Beatrice is the portrait. He appears to have blended in his thoughts the dear wife whom he had lost after but two years of married life, and that idealised Beatrice of whom his favourite poet said she was rapt "to be glorious under the banner of the blessed Queen Mary." "The new world" of which she is conscious, is that suggested in the final words of the "*Vita Nuova*": "That blessed Beatrice who

now gazeth continually on His countenance *qui est per omnia saecula benedictus. Laus Deo.*"

The work is harmonious and satisfying at once to the senses and to the mind. The artist made a noble choice of subject and a haunting melancholy pervades it. The colours are of a subdued and subtly harmonised splendour. Beatrice is clothed in a green dress, with purple and gold. A crimson dove, with outspread wings, lays upon her lap the grey poppy of death. The personified figure of Love is also in crimson, emblematic of the fire of love. The boding glance between him and Dante recalls the converse between them as related with quaint formality in the "*Vita Nuova*." Dante himself explains: "I have spoken of love as though it were a thing outward and visible; not only a spiritual essence, but as a bodily substance also."

By good fortune the original painting has found a permanent home in our National Gallery. Rossetti refused for some years to paint a replica, disliking to reproduce, in this way, the lineaments of his dead wife. Subsequently he made a number of copies,—not of the highest quality. In Manchester we saw the original, and the last "trade" replica, which belongs to Birmingham. Ford Madox Brown touched in the background. In colour and other respects it is obviously inferior.

Rossetti painted a predella for this picture also, representing the meeting of Dante and Beatrice in the Earthly Paradise.

One other picture which appeared in Manchester I will allude to—"La Donna Della Finestra," which embodies the following verses from the "*Vita Nuova*":

Love's pallor and the semblance of deep ruth
Were never yet shown forth so perfectly
In any Lady's face, chancing to see
Grief's miserable countenance uncouth,
As in thine, lady, they have sprung to soothe
When in mine anguish thou hast looked on me,
Until sometimes it seems as if through thee
My heart might almost wander from its truth.

Three lines of Dante's show with greater conciseness what it was that Rossetti set himself to paint—"A young and very beautiful lady, who was gazing upon me from a window with a gaze full of pity, so that the very sum of pity appeared gathered together in her."

Dante had in mediæval scholastic style, allegorised this lady as philosophy in the "Convito." But we need not try to read any such subtleties into Rossetti's picture. His brother, William, with his habitual sound sense and judgment, puts the point plainly, *à propos* of this very picture :

Rossetti had no sympathy with any downright allegory of that sort, and in representing the "Donna Della Finestra" he had no notion of representing philosophy, or any abstract personification of like kind. He contemplated the Donna as a real woman; but neither was her human reality intended to be regarded as the essence of the pictorial presentment,—rather her personal reality subserving the purpose of poetic suggestion,—an emotion embodied in feminine form,—a passion of which beautiful flesh-and-blood constitutes the vesture; humanly she is the lady at the window; mentally she is the Lady of Pity.

This inter-penetration of soul and body—this sense of an equal and indefeasible reality of the thing symbolized and of the form which conveys the symbol,—this externalism and internalism,—are constantly to be understood as the key-note of Rossetti's aim and performance in Art.

The later part of Rossetti's life was much occupied with the painting of such single figures of women,—types of beauty both physical and spiritual. He aimed at intensity and mystical expression; he had long left behind the habit of painting direct from nature, and his work became more and more subjective, the product of his own brooding, as he remained closeted in his studio. After his wife's death he tended to become morbid and suspicious; he suffered from insomnia and contracted the habit of taking chloral. His sense of colour became impaired, and failed him at times, uncertainly. He had become famous and could freely sell

these pictures of feminine beauty and mysticism. Unfortunately he often retouched and changed his canvases, not infrequently for the worse.

His mind ran on the enigmatic women of myth and ancient story: Lilith, Proserpine, Mnemosyne, Pandora, Sibyllas, Astarte Syriaca, and the like. Some of them are ardent and intense conceptions, as Proserpine or the powerful Astarte Syriaca; others show a sad falling off, like *La Pia* which was exhibited in Manchester. It had something of the attractive power of a woman of great, but faded beauty,—its colour ashen beside the glowing *Francesca*. Even the "*Donna Della Finestra*," though finer, was laboured and the expression overstrained.

I close with these two subjects taken from Dante. There is little or nothing Dantesque in them. And the pictures of legendary women, exotic, intellectualized, the outcome of dreaming and brooding, make one wish for fresh air and contact with rude nature. Dante proceeded from his early platonising when he felt, "Certainly the lordship of Love is good, seeing that it diverts the mind from all mean things,"—to one of the greatest achievements in literature. Rossetti was in deep sympathy with him in his early work, but his passionate sensuous nature directed him into other paths and whilst he produced works of great beauty and power in two arts, even to the last, yet ill-health in mind and body is to be traced in much of his work.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES: POET AND SUPER-TRAMP.

By J. J. RICHARDSON.

I.

THE popularity of the novel in the later half of the last century bids fair to be surpassed in the present one by the writing of biographies, recollections, experiences and books dealing with personalities, so eager are we to know what other people have done, said, or thought. The printing press to-day pours forth a continuous stream of books of travel, adventure, sport; of anecdote, gossip, scandal; of letters, diaries and reminiscences of living men and women, whilst the love affairs of dead celebrities are as constantly being hashed up for popular consumption. Everyone nowadays who has got within, or near, the rays of limelight falling on the world's stage is apparently unhappy until he, or she, has either written his life or some recollections of it, or, in his modesty, presumably, found some admiring friend to do it for him. Yet amidst this welter of personal revelation, I can only recall one man who at the comparatively early age of thirty-five has had the audacity to write and publish an account of his own life. And he is Mr. William H. Davies, the author of "The Autobiography of a Super-tramp."

In one who was then as unknown to fame as the still unknown youth in Gray's "Elegy," this may seem to savour of presumption and egotism, so that I hasten to say that there is no trace of any such feeling in his book. It is a most modest performance, but withal a most amazing one. It is so unconventional and in many ways

so imperturbably outspoken that it cannot be placed among those excellent biographies deemed suitable for presentation as a Sunday School class prize, or one that a careful parent would choose to give to his son in the hope that by the reading of it he would be encouraged in his efforts to become a successful business man. There is nothing in it of that praiseworthy spirit, and that strict accordance with conventional morality, which pervades the most improving story of Dick Whittington, for instance, who was thrice Lord Mayor of London. It does not inculcate the moral of the industrious apprentice who, by strict attention to business, when he emerges into manhood marries his master's daughter, and later on is taken into partnership, with the result that the business reaches such heights of prosperity as to justify its being floated, under the Limited Liability Act, as a Company, and a confiding public allowed to share in its success. The book is astounding, but it is not one to be lightly placed in the hands of young people. It is fitted rather for the reading of those middle-aged gentlemen who have already been Lord Mayors, or those still older ones whose chances of reaching such dizzy pinnacles of fame have passed for ever beyond their possibilities in life.

Let me, however, reassure you. In one aspect, the one usually associated first in people's minds with morality, it is a highly moral book, we might say unreally so when we recall what undisciplined human nature is, and how Mr. Davies cast off the restraints of social life. But so it is, and however much we may be startled by the candour of some of his confessions, we encounter nothing in his book that can be called 'improper.' Though a great portion of his life has been spent in towns, and often in the dingiest and most disreputable parts of them, yet his book impresses one by its open-air character. If, at times, we feel the stifling atmosphere of the casual ward, the doss house, and the between decks of an Atlantic cattle boat, there is soon blowing through the pages of his book the

wind from the sweet country and the rolling sea, for Mr. Davies loves the country above all things.

It was this, possibly, more than indolence that made him content to lead the vagrant life for several years, though oftentimes with a gnawing desire to do something better; to devote himself to study and self-expression in literature.

This desire might, perhaps, never have been realised but for an accident which caused him to lose one of his legs and put a stop for awhile to his tramping. Then he turned his attention to using his poetic gifts, but, finding how little need the world thinks it has for poetry, he wrote his unpretending autobiography, a book which in its realism, its absence of sentimentalism, reminds us of the writings of Defoe.

Yet Mr. Davies is a Welshman and might have been expected to cast some of the glamour of the Celtic spirit over his vagrant career. The sentimental temperament of the Celt, it has been pointed out, is "always ready to re-act against the despotism of fact." But Mr. Davies seems without this quality of his race. He is apparently as truthful and matter of fact as any unimaginative Saxon. He never attempts to idealise the life he has led, he never tells us anything that would create a desire, even if we were as young as he was, to emulate his example. Rather does he shatter all the possibilities of romance in the career of a tramp. He depicts the life with all its sordid shiftlessness, its rascality, its deceit, its greed, and without any redeeming qualities of kindness, pity and helpfulness. He draws no pleasant picture of his wanderings or of his companions, neither does he complain of his fate or offer excuses for his conduct. He merely records a plain unvarnished tale, but one intensely interesting because of its strangeness from lives sheltered, secure and conventional.

He tells us that he was born thirty-five years ago in a public-house in a small Welsh town. He has no recollec-

tion of his father, and his mother having married again, he was indebted to his grandparents for his upbringing.

My school days began, he says, but I played truant day after day, and the maidservant had to lead me to school as a prisoner. Although small of figure I was a good athlete, and so often fighting that some of my relatives thought that prize fighting was of a certainty to be my future vocation.

He became a ringleader among the boys and organised a band of robbers, six in number. Their success as thieves was soon stopped by discovery, and this was followed by their appearance before the magistrates, when he and another boy were sentenced to twelve strokes each with a birch rod.

After his school days were ended he was apprenticed to the picture-frame trade, but says he never became a good workman because a taste for reading made him sit up so late at night that he was unfit for work next day. This taste seems to have been acquired through a companionship with a studious lad about his own age. They read together Byron's poems, which he tells us were the first verses he read with enjoyment, and these were followed by Shelley, Marlowe and Shakespeare; but Wordsworth, as might be expected from a youth, he was indifferent to until later in life. When his apprenticeship was finished he was eager to get away from home and see the world. His grandmother, dying about this time, left him a small allowance, and having induced the trustee to advance him fifteen pounds, he set off for America.

At the time of his arrival there trade was depressed and work difficult to find, so that when chance made him acquainted with a notorious beggar called Brum, he was easily persuaded to adopt the life of a tramp, and become initiated into the art and mysteries of that disreputable calling. It was summer time, and his tutor was an adept at supplying all their needs from the generosity of

industrious people, so an auspicious start was made, and he writes:—

I shall never forget the happy summer months I spent with Brum at the seaside. Some of the rich merchants there could not spare more than a month or six weeks from business, but thanks be to Providence the whole summer was at our disposal. If we grew tired of one town, or, as more often happened, the town grew tired of us, we would saunter leisurely to the next one and again pitch our camp, and so on from place to place during the summer months.

His companion Brum was full of worldly wisdom about his profession, and quite ready to give him the benefit of his experience. Brum's success as a beggar lay chiefly among the fair sex and he had a great admiration for fat women, not because of the opulence of their charms, but for the reason that corpulence usually indicated good nature and generosity. He said:—

How can you expect those skinny creatures to sympathise with another when they half starve their own bodies?

He advised our Super-tramp if ever he begged in England to avoid all fine looking streets,

but every little court or blind alley you come across take possession without delay, especially if its entrance is under an arch, which hides the approach to the houses.

He must also avoid old fashioned towns without working people, towns in which there were no mills, factories or breweries.

When the summer was over Brum said they must find some comfortable prison for their winter residence, and so by hiding in railway waggons they beat their way towards Michigan, where Brum said he knew of an exceedingly pleasant jail which would cater well for them. How they got themselves within its walls and of the, to him, strange experiences he met with there, all make curious and interesting reading to us. With the advent of Spring our Super-tramp was anxious to get

back to the open-air life, but Brum preferred to stay where he was until the weather was warmer, and so they parted company. After loafing about for some weeks Mr. Davies engaged himself to work during the summer months as a fruit picker with the idea of saving sufficient money to enable him to return home. By the end of the season he had accumulated a hundred dollars, and a man who had worked along with him had nearly the same amount; and together they commenced their journey to England. When they reached Chicago the lure of a big town proved more than they could resist after being estranged for months from any excitement; so in a short time their savings were squandered. It then became necessary to find a way of getting through the winter, therefore his companion proposed that they should beat their way to Baltimore, and then take a job to look after the cattle on one of the boats running to Liverpool.

Mr. Davies tells us that—

These cattlemen are recognised as the scum of America, a wild lawless class of people, on whom the scum of Europe unscrupulously impose. They are an idle lot, but coming from a land of plenty, they never allow themselves to feel the pangs of hunger until they land on the shores of England, when their courage for begging is cooled by the sight of a greater poverty. Having kind hearts they are soon rendered penniless by the importunities of beggars. Men waylay them in the streets for tobacco, and they are marked men in the public houses.

He cast in his lot with these rough improvident men and gave up the idea of returning home.

Three more years of roving and tramping, living among the wildest and most reckless of men whose means of subsistence were supplied by begging and thieving, and casual labour of the roughest type. Spells of the hardest physical labour were followed by weeks of idleness and dissipation when the money earned on a fruit farm or a cattle boat was soon got rid of in the drinking saloons of

the towns. And these savings had to be carefully concealed from his associates, or neither they, nor even his life, in some cases, would have been safe. Then he writes:—

I had now been in the United States of America something like five years, working here and there as the inclination seized me, which, I must confess, was not very often. I was certainly getting some enjoyment out of life, but now and then the waste of time appalled me, for I still had a conviction that I was born to a different life.

It occurred to him that the allowance of ten shillings a week left him by his grandmother, not having been drawn upon during these five years, must have accumulated to over a hundred pounds, and he decided to return home and claim it. Having no money to pay his fare, he accomplishes the journey by the now familiar method of beating his way across America on the railroad, and finding employment as cattleman on a Liverpool boat, saving out of his wages sufficient to pay his fare to South Wales.

Two months of idling in his native town, spending his money unwisely, and the restlessness of his disposition asserts itself, and he makes for London. Here he found his money go quicker, but chancing to see accounts of the discovery of gold in Klondyke, he determines to go and get his share of it. He worked his passage across the Atlantic and made his first acquaintance with Canada, where he was pleased to find that the tramp and the beggar fared better even than in America. Meeting with an old pal called Three-fingered Jack, whom he told of the Klondyke Eldorado, they set off together beating their way westward on the trains. And here the accident befell him which put an end to his roving search for adventures. His account of this is so characteristic of his style of writing that I give it in his own words:—

The train whistled almost before we were ready, and pulled slowly out of the station. I allowed my companion the

advantage of being the first to jump, owing to his maimed hand. The train was now going faster and faster, and we were forced to keep pace with it. Making a leap he caught the handle bar and sprang lightly on the step, after which my hand quickly took possession of this bar, and I ran with the train, prepared to follow his example. To my surprise, instead of at once taking his place on the platform, my companion stood thoughtlessly irresolute on the step, leaving me no room to make the attempt. But I still held to the bar, though the train was now going so fast that I found a great difficulty in keeping step with it. I shouted to him to clear the step. This he proceeded to do, very deliberately, I thought. Taking a firmer grip on the bar, I jumped, but it was too late, for the train was now going at a rapid rate. My foot came short of the step, and I fell, and, still clinging to the handle bar was dragged several yards before I relinquished my hold. And there I lay for several minutes, feeling a little shaken, whilst the train passed swiftly on into the darkness.

Even then I did not know what had happened, for I attempted to stand, but found that something had happened to prevent me doing this. Sitting down in an upright position, I then began to examine myself, and now found that the right foot was severed from the ankle. This discovery did not shock me so much as the thoughts which quickly followed. For as I could feel no pain, I did not know but what my body was in several parts, and I was not satisfied until I had examined every portion of it. Seeing a man crossing the track, I shouted for assistance at the sound of my voice he seemed to understand at once what had happened. Coming forward quickly, he looked me over, went away, and in a minute or two returned with the assistance of several others to convey me to the station. A number of people were still there, so that when I was placed in the waiting room to bide the arrival of a doctor, I could see no other way of keeping a calm face before such a number of eyes than by taking out my pipe and smoking, an action which, I am told, caused much sensation in the local press.

After he had undergone two operations, his leg being amputated at the knee, he slowly recovered. At the kind-heartedness of the Canadians to him in his distress

he was astounded. They urged him to stay among them and assured him of a comfortable living. This he refused as he was anxious to get home, and, now that his body was disabled, to give his brains the chance they had longed for to earn him his living.

On his return to England he made up his mind to live on his ten shillings a week, and prepare himself for adding to this modest allowance by the pursuit of literature. He settled down in London, at one of the Rowton Houses, paying sixpence a night for his bed, and using the common room as his study. He passed two years thus, reading and writing. He tells us that he produced two tragedies, a comedy, a volume of humorous essays, and hundreds of short poems, but found no market for his wares. Then he tried the publishers with a small volume of short poems, and their reply was that they would publish it on his paying thirty pounds. So sanguine was he of its success that he determined to allow his weekly income to accumulate until it had reached that amount, whilst he earned his living tramping the country as a pedlar. He spent four shillings on pins, needles, and buttons and commenced to hawk these from door to door. He seems to have had neither the gift of tongue nor the perseverance to sell his wares, and found that his wooden leg was a much better stock-in-trade with which to get a living. He gives us many of his experiences whilst tramping England, but we pass them by, to come to the time when he was able to send the publisher his thirty pounds, and to find himself the possessor of 250 copies of his poems, thirty of which were sent to the newspapers for review.

But no success came his way, and as the weeks went by, in his disappointment, he tells us, he started to drink. The idea occurred to him of sending copies of his poems to successful literary men, with the result that, after disposing of sixty copies in this way, two well-known writers corresponded with me, one of whom I saw personally,

and they both promised to do something through the press. Relying on these promises I sent no more copies, being enabled to wait a week or two owing to the kindness of a playwright, an Irishman, as to whose mental qualification the world is divided, but whose heart is unquestionably great.

Mr. Bernard Shaw tells us in the delightful preface he has written for the "Autobiography," how he received Mr. Davies' little volume of poems, with

An accompanying letter asking me very civilly if I required a half-crown book of verses : and, if so, would I please send the author the half-crown : if not would I return the book. This was attractively simple and sensible. Further, the handwriting was remarkably delicate and individual : the sort of handwriting one might expect from Shelley or George Meredith. I opened the book and was more puzzled than ever ; for before I had read three lines I perceived that the author was a real poet.

Mr. Shaw then sent him the price of eight copies, and "a letter telling him that he could not live by poetry." This action led to Mr. Davies showing him the manuscript of the "Autobiography," and he at once wrote recommending it to a publisher.

Thus did our super-tramp come to some meed of fame and, presumably, of some measure of physical comfort in life. And his first book of poems has been followed at intervals by four others during the last four years.

II.

In the five thin volumes of Mr. Davies' work there is no poem of any considerable length. The little books contain chiefly short lyrics. He attempts nothing epic or dramatic. He is not descriptive or didactic. His distinctive quality is lyrical ; and the sincerity, the simplicity, the spontaneity of his gift makes an immediate appeal to us. At his best he is a singer of Nature and the open air ; and though he has touched, both humorously and pathetically,

certain aspects of the hard life he has known, his happiest moments are when singing,

Of brooks, of blossoms, birds and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July flowers.

From his delight in these springs a careless, spontaneous gaiety, charming in its unaffected abandonment. We might liken it, not to the amorous nightingale or the blithe skylark but to his own favourite among the birds, the robin. More than one of his lyrics sing the redbreast's praises, but none happier than this:—

Robin, on a leafless bough,
Lord in Heaven how he sings!
Now cold Winter's cruel wind
Makes playmates of poor, dead things.

How he sings for joy this morn!
How his breast doth pant and glow!
Look you how he stands and sings,
Half-way up his legs in snow!

If these crumbs of bread were pearls,
And I had no bread at home,
He should have them for that song;
Pretty Robin Redbreast, Come.

Could anything be simpler than this, or more charming?
Or this, in a different key, but redolent of the open air?

Oh, happy wind, how sweet
Thy life must be!
The great proud fields of gold
Run after thee;
And here are flowers, with heads
To nod and shake;
And dreaming butterflies
To tease and wake.
Oh, happy wind, I say,
To be alive this day.

Here is another, which he entitles, "A Summer's Noon":—

White lily clouds
In violet skies;
The sun is at
His highest rise.

The Bee doth hum,
Every bird sings;
The Butterflies
Full stretch their wings.

The Brook doth dance
To his own song;
The Hawthorn now
Smells sweet and strong.

The green Leaves clap
Their wings to fly;
Like Birds whose feet
Bird lime doth tie.

Sing all you Birds
Hum all you Bees;
Clap your green wings,
Leaves on the trees—

I'm one with all,
This present hour:
Things—far—away
Have lost their power.

Though he frequently strikes a deeper note, yet these poems show his essential qualities as a lyrist. His metres are varied, but at his best he sings with this easy, simple gaiety of disposition. Great as is his love of Nature, he seems able to sing of her only in her quiet and restful moods, in her days of sunny warmth or vernal showers. These are in harmony with his disposition, these delight his senses, and, like the birds, he sings joyously in the sunshine and the Spring, but is silent when cloud and

darkness lower upon him. Nature in her majesty, in her wildest scenic grandeur, the forces of Nature in their tumultuous restlessness in moments of storm and stress, make no appeal to him; and the aspect of Nature by night seems repellent. Though he sings with delight of the sky by day, yet of the glory of the heavens, when all the floor is inlaid with patines of bright gold, I can only recall two couplets,

Beneath the glorious stars, beneath that nest
Of singing stars men call the Milky Way.

and this, suggestive in its imagery, of a feeling of horror.

Big, spider stars with many legs,
Upon Heaven's ceiling spin in sight.

For one who spent years in tramping and sleeping out, and must therefore have been familiar with the aspect of the heavens at night as no town dweller can possibly be, it seems to me that in the lonesomeness and stillness of the night there was something strangely averse to his spirit which prevented him feeling the solemn beauty of the ever-circling constellations. We know that the appreciation of Nature in her most awe-inspiring scenes, and her fiercest tumults, is of comparatively recent growth. Perhaps Coleridge and Byron were the earliest to give it expression in our literature. Mr. Davies has told us that Byron was the first poet he ever read with pleasure, but we see no traces of Byron's influence upon his work. That he owes something to Wordsworth may be conjectured, but not, apparently, to any later poet. Of poets whose distinctive styles, both of thought and versification, one might have expected Mr. Davies to have been influenced by, if he had read their works—Tennyson, Swinburne, Henley, Kipling, for instance—one can detect nothing. He might be a poet of a century or more ago were it not for the scenes he depicts of life in the doss house, and for

one passage in which he images the motor car. This occurs in some lines reminiscent of Wordsworth, in a despondent mood:—

Few are thy friends, sweet Nature, in these days,
But thou art still the Solitary's love.
The glory of the river's long since gone,
The land is sped and beauty unrevealed.
The motor car goes humming down the road,
Like some huge bee that warns us from its way.

This intrusion of the motor-car stamps Mr. Davies' poem as one of the century. It is perhaps the only imagery of "hurry" in his work. Without it there would be nothing to make us say decisively that the poem was by a living writer. But the dislike of hustling is characteristic of Mr. Davies' attitude of mind. He is entirely out of touch with our busy, money-making material age. For such things he cares nothing. He calls it

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

He is an onlooker at the game of life, and has no desire to take a hand in what he sees being played around him. His mind looks back with a longing to the past, to what is fixed and unalterable. It is not filled with anxiety as to what future is in store for our restless, seething, impatient and changing era. In a poem "To the New Year," he sings:—

Give me New Year,
Tobacco, bread and meat, and beer.
Also a few old books, so I
Can read about an age gone by;
But as for how the present goes—
I'll thank the Lord the Devil knows.

And the narrow simplicity of this finds an echo in his "Songs of Joy," which we may regard as expressing his

"criticism of life," in so far as purely lyrical poetry may have any claim to such consideration:—

Sing out, my Soul, thy songs of joy;
Such as a happy bird will sing
Beneath a rainbow's lovely arch
In early Spring.

Think not of death in thy young days;
Why shouldst thou that grim tyrant fear,
And fear him not when thou art old,
And he is near.

Strive not for gold, for greedy fools
Measure themselves by poor men never;
Their standard still being richer men,
Makes them poor ever.

Train up thy mind to feel content,
What matters then how low thy store;
What we enjoy, and not possess,
Makes rich or poor.

Filled with sweet thought, then happy I
Take not my state from other's eyes;
What's in my mind—not on my flesh
Or theirs—I prize.

Sing happy Soul, thy songs of joy;
Such as a brook sings in the wood,
That all night has been strengthened by
Heaven's purer flood.

Whilst there is no denying Mr. Davies' inspiration and his individuality as a singer, there are yet echoes, as it were, in his work which tell us who have been his poetical forbears, and from whom he derives his style, his metrical equipment, his literary diction. We cannot think of him as familiar with modern or living poets, so absent from all his work is their trend of thought, and their variety and distinction of metrical forms. He has, surely, sat at the

feet of the Elizabethan lyrists, and the poets who sang at the Court of the first Charles. Perhaps, most of all, he is indebted to that lyrical master in the skilful handling of varied metres, that gayest and most spontaneous of singers, Herrick. If we are reminded of the Elizabethans in lines like these :

As daffodils, that plead with their sweet smiles
Our charity for their rude father March.

Of peaceful rivers not yet fretful grown
As when their mouths have tasted Ocean's salt.

Has sent forth one white hair to draw the black
Into that treason which dethrones my youth.

so in many of his shorter poems our ear catches something of the quaint simplicity of Herrick, and the verses are not unworthy of the older and greater poet. It is in this homely way he thinks of his muse :

I have no ale,
No wine I want;
No ornaments,
My meat is scant.

No maid is near,
I have no wife;
But here's my pipe
And, on my life,

With it to smoke,
And woo the Muse,
To be a king
I would not choose.

But I crave all,
When she does fail—
Wife, ornaments,
Meat, wine and ale.

and this, with its faint touch of sadness, how he addresses
 "The Moth":—

Say, silent Moth,
 Why hast thou let
 The midnight come,
 And no dance yet.

Man's life is years,
 Thy life a day;
 Is thine too long
 To be all play?

Man's life is long,
 He lives for years;
 So long a time
 Breeds many fears.

Thy life is short;
 Whate'er its span,
 Life's worth seems small
 Be't Moth or Man.

In a more cynical spirit, as if he might have been a
 disappointed and disillusioned Court hanger on, is "The
 Prover," which commences:—

If Life gives friends,
 'Tis Death that keeps them true:
 When living long
 Time proves them false or few;
 So Life's a boon
 When Death is coming soon.

But this does not express his settled outlook upon life. It
 is only a passing phase. His truer feelings are found in
 the dainty verses he entitles "An Example":—

Here's an example from
 A Butterfly;
 That on a rough hard rock
 Happy can lie;
 Friendless and all alone
 On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard,
No care take I;
I'll make my joy like this
Small Butterfly;
Whose happy heart has power
To make a stone a flower.

When Herrick gave up his London life, his life of tavern and Court to become a village priest, he wrote his "Farewell to Poetry," and at about the same age Mr. Davies published his "Farewell to Poesy," in which he expresses the fear that his singing days are done, "The poet in my soul is dying." Herrick had many years yet to live, and his finest body of poems, "The Hesperides," to write. And similarly Mr. Davies has come before us again in his later volume of "Songs of Joy," full of his bird-like quality, but with one poem, "A Dream," which we could have wished he had never written, or if written that he had burnt it afterwards. It has the taint of the morbid eroticism much too prevalent in present-day fiction and poetry.

In his longer poems the note of ecstasy is gone, the spontaneity of the joyous singer disappears. He has become serious, and in his two longest poems has chosen a serious theme around which to weave his thoughts—that of a life ruined through the enslavement to drink. Yet he can write with a fine abandon about alcohol, and has given us two most spirited drinking songs. One commences:—

A Bee goes mumbling homeward pleased,
He hath not slaved away his hours;
He's drunken with a thousand healths
Of love and kind regard for flowers.
Pour out the wine,
His joy be mine.

and the last two verses are:—

Is Bacchus not the god of gods,
Who gives to Beauty's cheeks their shine?

O Love, thou art a wingless worm;
 Wouldst thou be winged, fill thee with wine;
 Fill thee with wine,
 And wings be thine.

Then Bacchus, rule thy merry race,
 And laws like thine who would not keep?
 And when fools weep to hear us laugh,
 We'll laugh, ha! ha! to see them weep.
 O god of wine,
 My soul be thine.

The other is upon a more homely nectar; the ambrosia of
 Democracy—Ale—and begins:—

O what a merry world I see
 Before me through a quart of ale:

and the concluding verses are:—

One quart of good old ale, and I
 Feel then what life immortal is:
 The brain is empty of all thought,
 The heart is brimming o'er with bliss;
 Time's first child, Life, doth live; but Death,
 The second, hath not yet its breath.

Give me a quart of good old ale,
 Am I a homeless man on earth?
 Nay, I want not your roof or quilt,
 I'll lie warm at the moon's cold hearth;
 No grumbling ghost to grudge my bed,
 His grave, ha! ha! holds up my head.

A few of his poems treat of the town life with which he was so familiar—the life of the street, the dosshouse, the casual ward, and he touches it with a grim humour, in most cases, that enlivens its underlying unpleasantness. But one poem from out his strange life stands forth by a certain sad austerity. It is born of a bitter experience, and we feel this throbbing through the simple, restrained melody of the verses. The accomplishment of it is the

more to be wondered at when we remember that his subject is the uninspiring one of a lodging-house fire. It begins:

My birthday—yesterday,
Its hours were twenty-four;
Four hours I lived lukewarm,
And killed a score.

I woke eight chimes and rose,
Came to our fire below,
Then sat four hours and watched
Its sullen glow.

Then out four hours I walked,
The lukewarm four I live,
And felt no other joy
Than air can give.

My mind durst know no thought,
It knew my life too well:
'Twas hell before, behind,
And round me hell.

It is too lengthy to quote in full, but the last three verses run:—

No man lives life so wise
But unto time he throws
Morsels to hunger for
At his life's close.

Were all such morsels heaped—
Time greedily devours,
When man sits still—he'd mourn
So few wise hours.

But all my day is waste,
I live a lukewarm four
And make a red coke fire
Poison the score.

The poignancy of all that this implies must give us feelings of thankfulness that this truly joyous, childlike, spontaneous singer has escaped from his prison house, and found recognition, whilst living, of his genius as a lyrical poet of delicate and distinct quality.

THE ANONYMOUS IN MUSIC.

By ROBERT PEEL.

All great song has been sincere song.—*Ruskin.*

THE art of music is allied with another art in a manner which no two other arts ever can be. That other art is, of course, literature. The word literature is here used in preference to poetry, although it is quite true that the latter is nearly always the chosen vessel of the fleet in which music delights to sail. All poetry must be literature, but all literature is not of necessity poetry. When the union does take place it is more often out of literature that a partner is created than it is that out of music literature springs.

One may not know very many pieces of literature that are the outcome of special pieces of music, but we know that many settings of music have arisen out of special pieces of literature. Of course, to this, as to every other rule, there are exceptions. Burns, at times, wrote verses in keeping with what the lilt or rhythm of a tune suggested to him.

Not infrequently has it happened that a piece of literature has been produced, then some existing piece of music has been connected with it and the result has been—immortality!

It is quite possible to say that in some cases, strong though may have been the words, yet the music has proved stronger, and in a few instances partly submerged the words. Take, for instance, "Home, Sweet Home"; everyone knows the music, but how many can recite all Howard Payne's lines? Again, how many can get beyond the first, or at any rate two verses of "Auld Lang Syne"?

That particular portion or aspect which I here desire to consider is the "anonymous in music." Speaking generally, the creator or producer of a work of art is known, but it is a startling fact that some, nay many, of the greatest artistic productions or monuments that the world has ever seen or known cannot be attributed to any particular individual. Many of the marvellous sculptures of ancient Greece, not a few cathedrals of entrancing beauty, and paintings by old masters are the work of men whose names are unhonoured and unsung.

Then in literature. From the very beginning we seem to be in doubt. Go as far back as the Bible; whatever certainty there may be with respect to some portions, there is doubt in connection with others. We may go further in one or two cases and say absolutely that the writer is unknown. Is the *Iliad* the product of one or more than one man? Who was Homer? Who wrote those tales, still fascinating, known colloquially as "*The Arabian Nights*"? And so on all down the ages.

It is the same in music. Much with which we are familiar, that is with us constantly, and which in our social life has become indispensable, cannot now be accorded to any particular composer.

Many are inclined to think that music is the earliest, the most ancient of all the arts. Man would sing or hum before he would either write, build, carve or paint. And yet it is the last of all arts to come to perfection. Some will have it that it is in a crude condition to-day and a long way short of its full development. Music, apart from words, cannot, like literature, be made a vehicle for personalities or party spite. When it does speak it tells the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. As Hadow says, "It teaches nothing, it enforces nothing and prescribes no system of conduct."

The art of music is unique in this respect, it requires two quite distinct kinds of artists—the composer and the performer. Either of them may be utterly unable to take

the place of the other, but without the combination of these two music cannot be. To the multitude, the dots, dashes and lines on paper are no more intelligible than were the characters on Cleopatra's needle two hundred years ago.

One idea more: the production or addition must be new, not a copy. It must give you what has never been heard before, what no previous brain has ever imagined.

We all have a very clear idea of what is anonymous. We know what the word means and what is meant to be conveyed. But what is music? That is a question easier asked than answered, for the art of music is the most elusive of all the arts. A piece of sculpture is unmistakable, and it would strike one as its strength or beauty is true to its original or ideal. So a painting; it may fascinate you and almost make you believe that what you know is on a flat piece of canvas is a real living thing, or it may be miles of country stretched out before your eyes. Burke once said:—

No work of art can be great but as it deceives.

That may or may not be so, but we have more than once looked at a portrait until we have almost fancied that the subject would step right out of the frame and walk and talk like ourselves.

As to what is music, men differ, differ very much, one may almost say must of necessity differ. I suggest that a continuation of certain sounds causing emotion is the root principle of music. The more the emotions are worked upon the truer will be the music, and proportionately as a man's emotions are stirred, pleasurably or otherwise, so should be his appreciation of it. To quote Herbert Spencer:

It may be shown that music is but an idealisation of the natural language of emotion and that music must be good or bad as it conforms to the laws of this natural language.

Further, it has been said:—

Music has no chance of surviving unless it arises spontaneously from a healthy state of emotion.

Then what branch or section of the art is it that carries the spark and lights up this latent fire of emotion? That stirs us and makes us feel that which we cannot express in words? In my humble opinion there is only one answer, namely, melody. Helmholtz tells us that "melody is the essential basis of music." Gore-Ouseley writes:—

The origination of melody is after all the true act of composition.

Patti singing "Home, Sweet Home"; Patey-Whytock singing "On the Banks of Allan Water"; Sims Reeves singing "Deeper and Deeper Still," followed by "Waft her Angels"; and Santley singing "Revenge, Timotheus cries." That is music.

By melody is here meant simple melody—melody harmonised and melody supported, elaborated and heightened. That is, to simple melody may be added the sensuous appeal caused by harmony, colouring, time and splendid orchestration; and the intellectual appeal resulting from perfect structure of design, balance and finish. As for example, Schubert's "Erl King," Mendelssohn's "O! Rest in the Lord," Gounod's "Lend Me Your Aid," Wagner's "Star of Eve." It need not even be wedded to words. When one hears the seductive strains of a waltz, the lively hornpipe or jig, or the impelling call of a march no words are necessary. No words are needed to explain, say, the overture to "Figaro." It is simply a joyous telling of coming nuptials or some other such happy event. On the other hand, what words can express one's feelings when listening to Beethoven's Symphony in C minor? Of course, these examples can be easily multiplied, but I think these are enough to illustrate my meaning.

Now, until very recently, say the last half century or so, all, or practically all, the music we have and to which we delight to listen is based upon melody. Certainly all that has come down to us from old and remote times is so based. True it is that when the oldest melodies were written there

were no orchestras and no scorings possible like unto what we have to-day, but they have come down and live, not because they were all that could come down, but because they possess the root, the soul and the life of music.

Of late a new school has been struggling fiercely for the public ear. One hardly knows how to name it. I can imagine some people calling it the school of cacophony. The best that can be and has been said for it is to call it the impressionist school; the impressions being, as a rule, clever, vague, intricate, involved and ugly. It would seem to be a canon of that school that the more difficult the piece the finer it must necessarily be, and the more it makes your head ache to find the meaning or any meaning at all the nearer to perfection the composer has attained.

The tendency is largely to abolish melody and treat it as lumber, or at any rate as a negligible quantity. Sir Frederick Gore-Ouseley writes:—

There is sometimes a tendency among modern composers to make melody and regularity of design altogether subsidiary to instrumental effect. Such a method of proceeding is greatly to be deprecated inasmuch as it is a complete inversion of the true order of things. The better way is always to begin with the melody then harmonise, then extend it.

If the modernists, as they love to call themselves, are right in their attitude of abandoning melody, a new meaning will have to be found for the word music. When one sees criticisms on music describing, say, Mendelssohn as "empty"; Bach, "mechanical"; Gounod, "stale pastry"; Handel, "worn out"; Mozart, "pretty and tuney"; Beethoven, "a master, but an old one and ready for the shelf"—one exclaims, "Where are we to turn for music?"

When listening to some of the new school productions one must be prepared to solve a problem in comparison with which Home Rule, Tariff Reform and Bimetallism are transparent simplicities. Farewell to the—

Music that gentler on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes.

As for enjoying a "concord of sweet sounds" or listening to strains of delight, heaven help those who expect such a pleasure. I saw a criticism the other day of one of the new school pieces. It is as follows:—

The work is now being published as a piano solo which is not merely difficult but in parts practically unplayable. The pianist who could give any true impression of the work would appear to need at least three hands.

It is sometimes as difficult to find out what the composer wants to tell you as it is to say exactly what are metaphysics. How often have we asked friends what they thought of some new work? One knew well what they really thought, but as a rule a non-committal answer came. They must be abreast of the times. They dare not be as honest as Charles Lamb, who, on one occasion, said he rushed from the opera house to solace his sufferings by the rattle of cab-wheels. There is a good story about Swinburne. A lady, knowing his musical poverty, having taken the rest of the company into her confidence, told Swinburne she would render on the piano a very ancient Florentine ritornello which had just been discovered. She then played "Three blind mice," and Swinburne was enchanted. He found that it reflected to perfection the cruel beauty of the Medicis.

It is no answer to say we are advancing, new ideas will come to the front, will supersede and take the place of the old ones. It all depends upon what those new ideas are. It is said Wagner was spoken of for a time just as the modernist is now. But Wagner recognised the claims of melody. Composing music and discarding melody is similar to an architect taking the leaning tower at Pisa as his model. He can erect such a building and at such an angle, but it will not be as beautiful and as stable as a

Greek temple. Besides being the basis, beautiful melody is to music what the cathedrals, abbeys and Greek temples are to architecture. Writing for virtuosity, intricate phrasing and elaborate scoring seem now the be all and end all of the new school: and it is easier to do that than to create a fine melody, one that will live. Gore-Ouseley says:—

Any man may learn how to harmonise correctly by a diligent study of the principles and rules of the art by the aid of qualified instructors. But in the case of melody no amount of study can teach an unmusical person to invent a new tune. The faculty of inventing a new melody is a gift.

If all that has been written by the new school, say, of Debussy, Delius, Reger, Strauss and others, could be distilled it is questionable whether or no there would be as much music left as lives in Beethoven's "No. 5" or "No. 7," "Don Giovanni" or "Tannhäuser." The further a composer gets from melody as a basis the greater is the danger of forcing music into unsuitable and illegitimate channels. It by no means follows that all melody should be of a cloying, sugary, sickly, sentimental kind. We are not like the boy who wanted his claret sweetening. For my own part, I view this abandoning of melody not so much as an enlargement of the borders of the scope of music but as an actual shifting or sapping of the foundations of the art. Does it follow, in order to enlarge the field for composers that melody should be considered as quite unnecessary?

Master after master from Palestrina downwards has uplifted the art to the pinnacle of perfection in his period: master after master has added new fields in which to work. Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Wagner (for a time) and others have improved upon and widely extended the bounds within which music could be legitimately exercised but each one of them so wrote that melody was the foundation stone of his work. At the same

time, it by no means follows that music has reached its bounds or perfection. The man may come some day who will combine the extraordinary skill exhibited, say, by Elgar, with the wonderful flow of melody that came from, say, Mozart and Schubert.

Is this last school, sometimes called the athletic musical school, a sign of decadence? It may so turn out. But it may only be a phase, a reaction or protest against the modern Italian school which was pushed to such unwarrantable lengths by men such as Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini and others. One thing is intolerable, and that is the relegation, as it were, to a back seat, of the finest musical instrument on earth, viz., the human voice.

To-day is the day of the instrumentalist—virtuosity in excelsis—and the singer seems to be somewhat on the wane, but there need be no doubt that both melodist and vocalist will come again to their own and the crash, bang and smash school will be placed on a suitable pedestal:—

When the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And silently steal away.

If a piece of music be marked "anonymous" never fail to examine it, for there is almost certain to be something which has made it live, unaided and unknown. Anonymous music, generally speaking, is not modern. Much has come down to us from times when publishers were either scarce or non-existent and royalties could hardly be enforced. In fact, many of our oldest melodies have been handed down by master to pupil when minstrels were attached to the retinue of great nobles or went about from castle to castle singing and harping to lords and ladies, largesse being liberal, and honourable treatment accorded to them. William the Conqueror appropriated three parishes in Gloucestershire to the support of his minstrel. Printing and education, however, caused a change, and the decay of the minstrels began.

Prior to Elizabeth's time their condition had changed and changed rapidly, for the worse, until in 1597 an Act was passed declaring minstrels wandering abroad to be rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars.

That was the knell for their extinction as honoured minstrels and keepers of the nation's songs and traditional music. Scott gives us a picture of such an one in "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." Of course, he took a poet's licence and the old minstrel is supposed to have survived the revolution of 1688.

The question has been raised before, why is so much of this ancient music anonymous? It is difficult to say definitely. Some writers have suggested that the gift of composition may have been more common in those far-off times than it is to-day, and that being so, it was not appreciated so highly; that therefore the names of the composers, not being carefully preserved, soon became forgotten, and in time quite lost.

There would be, there was, music in the composition of men in those days. Was there ever a time when it was absent? But whether or no it predominated to the extent suggested I would not like to say. Certain monarchs, we are told, were skilled in minstrelsy, as if that were a fact to be noticed specially as being somewhat uncommon.

The difficulties of preserving the names of composers were certainly greater then than now. What these minstrels played and sang was known only to themselves, copies rarely being kept; and if they did not know or care to tell who composed such and such air or forgot the name, all trace was at once lost. They passed on that which had been handed down to them, and it is probable that some of the tunes played and songs sung were in existence centuries before they came to be written down. That writing down, or, in a word, printing, was not universal until late in the fifteenth and early in the sixteenth centuries.

The advent of the printing press almost synchronised

with the passing of the minstrel, and very soon what had been the possession of the minstrel alone became the property of every one who could read, and was recognised as one of the accomplishments of a lady or gentleman. Once written down or printed, the chances of life for these grand old strains and ballads were immeasurably increased. But if the minstrel had not known or told the name of the composer or author, in nearly every case all trace of such was lost.

Even in the eighteenth century, towards the close of it, old harpers went about Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland playing to all who cared to listen, airs, some of which were known to few besides themselves, many having come down from a remote antiquity.

Neither must one forget the social change, the great upheaval which took place at that period—the fifteenth century. The feudal system was at the last gasp; a system which, if it had not actually fostered the art of minstrelsy, had certainly been a support, refuge and source of reward to the bards who exhibited their skill in camp and court.

All this was detrimental to the class or caste of minstrels and instead of continuing, as it were, on a pedestal high above their hearers, they were compelled—such was the spread of knowledge and skill—to appear at times almost on a level with their listeners.

It was in Elizabeth's time that printed music first became universal, but of that which was then printed much had come down from a past period. Collections of hymns, etc., first made their appearance here and on the Continent about this date, being largely made up of what had been previously in use for some time.

Taking the sacred side first, the following selection will show the quality of some of the hymns that have come down to us:—

Dundee or French: from Scotch Psalter, 1560—1600.

This is the tune mentioned by Burns in "The Cotter's Saturday Night":—

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps "Dundee's" wild warbling measures rise.

Kingston or Dismissal: a Cornish melody, sung by Cornish fishermen.

Winchester (new): from Hamburg Musikalisches Handbuch. Attributed by some to B. Crasselius.

Winchester (old): Este's Psalter: London 1592. The first psalter in which the tunes were named.

London (new): Scotch Psalter.

Narenza: Kölner Gesangbuch.

Hursley or Stillorgan: German; may be by Peter Ritter, or is it a Huguenot tune? It may safely be said that no tune is better known or more widely sung than this, and when it is wedded to Keble's words, "Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear," it is matchless as an evening hymn. It will be difficult to find a country in which the English tongue is spoken where this tune is not constantly used in Christian worship. The words and the air, together, are immortal.

St. Hilary: Anonymous.

Sicilian Mariners: Anonymous.

St. Michael: Daye's Psalter, London, 1588.

Helmsley: Mention is here made of this famous tune to the Advent hymn, "Lo! He comes with clouds descending," because it is an adaptation (possibly by Olivers) of a song from a burletta sung by Miss Catley in 1773.

Old Hundredth: Geneva Psalter; by, or adapted by, Franc about 1550. Known in England (Daye's Metrical Psalter), 1563.

The First Nowell: Traditional; one of the many ancient Christmas carols.

All the above hymn tunes are to be found in the Church

Hymnal (edited by Sir R. P. Stewart), Hymns Ancient and Modern, or the Bristol Tune Book. Many of them are in all three. The tune St. Hilary is the one in the Church Hymnal.

Turning to the Secular side, the quantity of anonymous music to choose from is simply appalling, a veritable "embarras de richesses." Only a very limited selection can be made, and space forbids anything but the scantiest reference to their history or evolution. Further, with two exceptions, the choice has been confined to British examples, and of those chiefly English. A few are here given:—

"Chanson de Roland": Said to have been sung at Senlac by Taillefer, a Norman minstrel, rushing into the fight. Dr. Crotch printed this tune from a MS. in the Bodleian Library.

"Sumer is icumen in": Believed to be about 1250. Claimed to be the earliest secular composition in parts known to exist in any country; originally written for six male voices. Remarkable for its suitability to the words, beautiful melody and perfect rhythm.

"The Bailiff's daughter of Islington": The origin of this fine ballad is lost in antiquity.

"Down among the dead men": Nothing appears to be known about the composer of this tune. All that can be said is that it first appeared in the third volume of the "Dancing Master," printed by Playford's successors: end of the 17th century.

"There was a Jolly Miller": The tune is traditional, ancient. It is understood that it was at the old Dee Mill at Chester where the man lived who stirred the envy of Bluff King Hal.

"Sir Roger de Coverley": This is a hornpipe, and a Lancashire hornpipe. The Roger mentioned was a Calverley, of Calverley, in Yorkshire. Writing of this Roger, Thoresby, in the latter half of the 17th century, says:—

He was a person of renowned hospitality, since at this day, the obsolete known tune of Roger a Calverly is referred to him who, according to the custom of those times, kept his minstrels, etc.

Lancashire was famous for hornpipes. Michael Drayton in his "*Polyolbion*" writes:—

The neat Lancastrian nymphs, for beauty that excel,
That for the Hornpipe round, do bear away the bell.

The hornpipe in those days was danced in a different manner from what we know it to-day; it was then a country dance, and the Lancashire hornpipe again in some way differed from other hornpipes. It will be noticed that the tune has no proper ending or finish: it is a never-ending round.

"Robin Adair": An old Irish air "Eileen-a-roon." When and by whom it was written no one can tell. In the original Celtic are the words, "Cead mille failte," the famous Irish welcome. The English words were written by Lady Caroline Keppel, daughter of the Earl of Albemarle, at Bath about 1750. She and Robert Adair, a young, fascinating, but penniless, Irish doctor, were deeply in love. Their union was prohibited. Pining away through ill-health, the doctors, as a last resource, suggested their marriage, which took place in 1758. The words written to the tune have unfortunately been altered by someone, destroying the unwavering and hopeful affection of the lady in her deepest trouble.

"The Leather Bottel": This is a very ancient tune; the words and their pronunciation savour of the period of Chaucer and Piers Plowman.

"Malbrough or Marlbruck s'en va-t-en guerre": These lines may not sound familiar, but the tune is certainly one of the best known and most frequently heard. It may be an old French air, the oldest words are French and point to a period of the Crusades. It is said to be known to the

Arabs who have their own words to it. We are all familiar with the tune in the guise of "We won't go home till morning," and also in the appreciative chorus, "For he's a jolly good fellow." I append one verse (in French) and a free English translation which may suggest how the "morning" of the roystering song comes in:—

Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine;
Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Ne sait quand reviendra,
Ne sait quand reviendra,
Ne sait quand reviendra.

CHORUS.

Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine:
Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Ne sait quand reviendra.

English translation:—

Marlbrook the prince of commanders,
Has gone to the war in Flanders:
His fame is like Alexander's,
But when will he come home?
But when will he come home?
But when will he come home?

CHORUS.

He won't come home till morning,
He won't come home till morning,
He won't come home till morning,
Till daylight doth appear.

In this version, a late one, Marlborough and Flanders come in, but he was not the original hero of the song. How come we to use the words, "For he's a jolly good fellow"? I simply do not know.

"Yankee Doodle": Beyond the fact that the tune was known here and in America in the middle of the 18th century no one can say who composed it. It is a complete mystery. As a national air it approaches the ridiculous, and the original words are absolutely the "*reductio ad absurdum*." The Hon. S. Salisbury says:—

Yankee Doodle is national property, but it is not a treasure of the highest value. It has antiquarian claims for which its friends do not care. It cannot be disowned and will not be disused.

It is a quick, rollicking air and no more.

"The Last Rose of Summer": One of the most delicious and haunting of melodies; one of the tunes of the world. Who composed it? Again we are baffled. The only thing certain about it is that Tom Moore did not. He wrote the words of the song and wedded them to a tune (which he altered a little) called the "Groves of Blarney." This tune was known and popular before Moore was born. Is it Irish? Very unlikely since Bunting does not claim it as such.

"The Vicar of Bray": The words as we have them probably were written by a soldier in the time of George I. The tune, a very old one, called the "Country Garden," was made use of. With regret it must be said the current story about the Vicar of Bray is not borne out by the facts. No one Vicar of Bray held that living from Henry VIII's time to Elizabeth. It is distasteful to relegate pleasant history to the level of the story of Dorothy Vernon and Haddon Hall Terrace. Anyhow the tune is ancient and the story edifying.

"Come Lasses and Lads": The earliest copy of this ballad is called, "The rural dance about the May-pole." But who composed the music? Mystery! It is old-traditional, and that is all that can with certainty be said about it. Both words and music are redolent of Old England—Merrie England!

Ye anonymous singers! We hear your voices, but know not your names. But so long as music holds humanity so long will your strains compel our homage and be like:—

The pleasant books, that silently among
Our household treasures take familiar places,
And are to us as if a living tongue
Spake from the printed leaves or pictured faces!

PUFFS FROM MY PIPE.

By ARTHUR W. FOX.

IT is no part of my present purpose to defend the soothing practice of "meditating upon the slender pipe," as Dan Horace hath it; nor do I intend to expatiate upon the manifold virtues of tobacco. I shall content myself with summoning from the Valhalla of the mighty three sufficient witnesses to speak for themselves. Huxley whose eminence in the triple world of science, criticism and literature few will lightly question, smoked because to use his own words "it equalised the system." Byron the haughty patrician praised the "Indian weed" with more strenuous enthusiasm. He goes so far as to sing or say:—

Sublime tobacco! which from east to west
Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's rest;
Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides
His hours, and rivals opium and his brides;
Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,
Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand;
Divine in hookas, glorious in a pipe,
When tipped with amber, mellow, rich and ripe;

Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
Thy naked beauties.—Give me a cigar.

Charles Kingsley reaches a loftier pitch of exaltation in his eulogy of the fragrant herb, which had breathed forth its aroma so often from his elegant "churchwarden." He represents that old sea-dog Salvation Yeo as saying with profound conviction:—

When all things were made none was made better than
this; to be a lone man's companion, a bachelor's friend, a

hungry man's food, a sad man's cordial, a wakeful man's sleep, and a chilly man's fire; while for staunching of wounds, purging of rheum, and settling of the stomach, there is no herb like unto it under the canopy of heaven.

Where the distinguished scientist, the divine poet and the poetic divine are in accord, lesser souls may well consent to follow their united example.

Tobacco is the literary man's usual and most useful companion, which has the power of soothing his too irritable nerves. What Thomas Carlyle would have been without it, words cannot express; while Tennyson employed it as the promoter of silent quietude and the unfailing provocative of the poetic afflatus. I could call a host of others in every rank and profession in life to support me in my true-hearted affection for the curling wreaths ascending from my pipe. It is my constant comrade alike when I am merged in the perplexed arguments of deep philosophy, and when during the digestive interval after dinner I recreate myself with reading the lighter verse of our less known humourists and poets. To one of these I would fain introduce new friends, and puff his wares, while I puff my "Luntin' Mixture." The weed may prove to be somewhat mild in texture and character: but after all it may be none the worse for its "ethereal mildness." Cholmondley Pennell is my theme, a man once of some note amongst the veracious company of anglers. Two volumes from his pen on "Fishing" are swimming, if I may so term it, in the famous "Badminton Library," and seventeen years ago he was a Commissioner in the great "Fisheries' Exhibition." But I do not intend to quote either from the foregoing volumes, or from the Report of that excellent Exhibition. Such citations would have a fishy fragrance, which at the best of times is not entirely satisfactory, and when not fresh exhales an unspeakable aroma.

Many years ago this piscatorial author committed to the press two charming little books of verse bearing the

suitable titles of "Puck on Pegasus" and "Pegasus Re-saddled," which are out of print and nearly forgotten by the hasty readers of a "hustling" time. "Puck" in either volume has always been a favourite obligato to my post-prandial pipe. The first of his appearances consists of a collection of lively verse, always witty, sometimes beautiful, and gleaming with humour now and then. Almost all of the poems are presented with an admirably solemn air of mocking mischief, as befits the tricky sprite, who is their godfather; yet they are not usually so well known as their undoubted merit warrants. It is always a cheerful task to summon from "the fields of sleep" the works of an author, who has not deserved to be forgotten entirely. Whether or no one of my lighter favourites will commend himself to the reader remains to be seen. In any case his books shall be taken down from the shelf, dusted and set before you.

The title—"Puck on Pegasus"—is very aptly chosen, as it explains accurately though under the guise of metaphor the contents of the volume. As Shakespeare's true lovers know, Robin Goodfellow is ever full of wanton mischief: he has the reprehensible habit of leading his victims a pretty dance, to leave them cooling their heels and some portion of their persons in a quagmire, while he himself vanishes with the ripple of mocking laughter. Such is the method of most of our author's pieces: he begins with an affectation of solemn seriousness to lead the way, and his reader follows him at first with equal seriousness. The author and the reader go birds'-nesting together, he himself guiding the other to a notable nest, whereof he knows. On the road he beguiles the time with serious chat in musical verse, then he suddenly disappears in a peal of irrepressible laughter, while his companion is left with a genuine and undoubted "mare's nest." Yet his mischief is so harmless, that its dupe can only laugh in company.

Listen to the song of "In-the-Water," which is delight-

fully reminiscent of a certain American poet known as Longfellow, and which recalls an obsolete garment of a foolish and inflated fashion. Puck says:—

When the summer night descended
Sleepy, on the White-Witch water,
Came a lithe and lovely maiden,
Gazing on the silent water—
Gazing on the gleaming river—
With her azure eyes and tender—
On the river glancing forward,
Till the laughing wave sprang upward,
Upward from his reedy hollow,
With the lily on his bosom,
With his crown of water-lilies—
Curling every dimpled ripple,
As he sprang into the starlight,
As he clasped her charmed reflection
Glowing to his crystal bosom—
As he whispered, " Fairest, fairest,
Rest upon this crystal bosom! "

And she straightway did according:—

Down into the water stept she,
Down into the wandering river,
Like a red-deer in the sunset—
Like a ripe leaf in the autumn:
From her lips, as rose-buds snow-filled,
Came a soft and dreamy murmur,
Softer than the breath of summer,
Softer than the murm'ring river,
Than the cooing of Cushawa,—
Sighs that melted as the snows melt,
Silently and sweetly melted;
Sounds that mingled with the crisping
Foam upon the billow resting;

Yet she spoke not, only murmured.

From the forest shade primeval,
Piggey-Wiggey looked out at her;

He, the very Youthful Porker,—
 He, the Everlasting Grunter,—
 Gazed upon her there and wondered!
 With his nose out, Rokey-Pokey—
 And his tail up, Curly-Wurly—
 Wondered what on earth the joke was,
 Wondered what the girl was up to—
 What the deuce her little game was—
 Why she didn't squeak and grunt more!
 And she floated down the river,
 Like a water-proof Ophelia—
 FOR HER CRINOLINE SUSTAINED HER.

These lines afford an excellent instance of anti-climax. Longfellow himself need not have been ashamed of the first part of the poem. Most readers would naturally expect the tragedy of a love-lorn maiden seeking repose in a watery grave. Instead of such a dire event Puck simply tells us of a new use for that exploded garment the crinoline as a water-carriage, rather cool and dewy perhaps, but in its own way and within its own limits not entirely unsatisfactory.

Cholmondeley Pennell is extremely skilful in this peculiar art of leading up to the sweet unexpected. With a certain class of reader the plunge into the headlong abyss of bathos produces an unnecessary effusion of bile. It acts upon his nerves with a stinging vigour like that of *Ammonium forte* upon the olfactory organs of the unwary. Unlike tobacco to its familiars, it is a nerve-irritant to him and with a lofty sniff he would consign to limbo "Puck upon Pegasus" with all its kind. To me the gymnastics of wit are always interesting and often mirth-provoking: indeed only unintentional bathos, that common fault of greater poets, changes its initial consonant and affords an illustration of unconscious pathos. Our poet has many pieces of this character and each endowed with an excellence of its own. For example, he treats us to a heartrending "Petition," which gradually increases in

intensity, as its verses glide along and which keeps up the illusion of solemnity until the last line. It runs:—

Ah! pause awhile, kind gentleman,
Nor turn thy face away,
There is a boon that I must ask,
A prayer that I would pray.

Thou hast a gentle wife at home?
A son—perchance like me—
And children fair with golden hair
To cling around thy knee?

Then by their love I pray thee,
And by their merry tone;
By home, and all its tender joys,
Which I have never known;—

By all the smiles that hail thee now;
By every former sigh;
By every pang that thou hast felt,
When alone, perchance, as I,—

By youth and all its blossoms bright,
By manhood's ripened fruits,
By Faith and Hope and Charity—
Yer'll let me clean yer boots!

Here once more the poet leads his reader carefully on until the inevitable plunge is to be taken, which is the more refreshing from its entirely unforeseen nature. It reminds one of the disagreeable negro-boy, who once at least said to his innocent sister, "Open your mouf, and shut yar eyes, and see what heaben will send you." She was unwary enough to comply with his request and was rewarded by the insertion of a cool, lively, and refreshing little frog!

Doubtless verse of this style is reprehensible in the extreme to all of the nine Muses, save indeed Thalia; but usually it is uncommonly amusing. There is a quaint

simplicity and a beautiful freshness about it which can hardly fail to tickle the fancy of the glorious Apollo. Cod liver oil as a remedy is good and invigorating; but it needs to be floated upon brandy if it is to sink into its proper place. "Puck on Pegasus" is delightful, not so much from the "cod-liver-oil" portion of his lucubrations, as from the excellent *spirit* at the bottom thereof. He has a charming rural—truly rural—piece entitled "Not Exactly!" which introduces a pale young curate endowed with a flowery imagination and a verdant intellectual capacity, who addresses a village-boy of vacuous expression and prosaic clod-hoppery. The curate begins the dialogue and proceeds blandly and sweetly, until he wins his answer:—

Oh! whose yon cottage by the brook,
Yon cottage white and clean;
Canst tell me, little village-boy,
For 'tis a pleasant scene?

A pleasant and a lovely scene,
Where innocence must dwell;
Where gentle-hearted peasants learn
To love the Sabbath-bell.

Not theirs the strife for vulgar wealth,
For sordid gain unblest;
Their simple wants are well supplied
From Nature's bounteous breast.

In peaceful labour flows their life
Amid such scenes as these;
And ah! methinks I spy a friend
Beneath the chestnut trees,—

A friend of men! that faithful friend,
Whose patience ne'er doth fail,—
Who lets the little clodhoppers
Play mildly with his tail.

It is, *it is!* Behold the beast
So rudely termed an ass!

Behold the beast who doth rejoice
In thistles more than grass!

Then tell me whose these rural sweets?
These joys that toil reward;
The purling brook—the whisp'ring trees—
The Edward on the sward—

“The cottage with the rustic thatch?”
At length the urchin spoke—
“That ere's where Fayther kills the pigs,
And yon's his Cat's Meat Moke!”

A serene Lacustrine atmosphere pervades the foregoing lines; an air of holy calm breathes over the scene presented: yet our friend Puck is once more laughing in his sleeve. He is perfectly conscious of his own mischievous object, while the exalted description of the lowly ass is highly diverting. That patient exile from Jerusalem is variously styled donkey, Jackass, John-donkey, Cuddie (after St. Cuthbert), Dickey (after Richard Coeur-de-Lion), Moke, Neddy, and now our spirit or poet has elongated the diminutive into the prouder fullness of “Edward.” A more touching portrayal of the aforesaid “Edward” will not easily be found: yet an uneasy suspicion haunts our mind, while the curate is addressing the rustic, that there is more than one “Edward” to adorn the rural landscape. These verses give us a capital taste of our author's quality: through the mask of good-humoured dullness the keen eyes of good-natured humour peep forth; though the style is solemn as that of Dr. Watts when writing for children, the smile is as wide as the lips which it enwreathes. Grave, humourless people will lift up the sanctified whites of their mournful eyes and denounce such efforts as nonsense. They *are* nonsense; but there is more real sense in some nonsense than in all the affected seriousness in the world. Funereal epitaphs are infinitely duller than mischievous parody; yet they are frequently nonsense, and solemn nonsense is far more

nonsensical than sportive nonsense. Let venerable Sober-sides learn to shake loose his stiff joints with wholesome laughter and sense may perchance follow where it has seldom been known before.

Many more selections might be made similar to the foregoing; but they would only serve to show one side of Puck's whimsical humour. Hence we shall do well to take our steps to another booth in the fair, to "pay our shot," to enter and be amused. The title of one particular show is "Comic Miseries," which exhibits two persons perfectly harmless and not a little amusing. A confirmed dyspeptic, whose clamorous appetite cries aloud for the food of other days, discourses savagely with a much enduring waiter in a well-furnished restaurant:—

"Lunch, sir? Yes, sir, pickled salmon,
Cutlets, kidneys, greens and——" "Gammon!
Have you got no wholesome meat, sir?"
Flesh or fowl that one can eat, sir?"
"Eat, sir? yes, sir, on the dresser
Pork, sir"—"Pork, sir, I detest, sir"—
"Lobsters?" "Are to me unblest, sir,"—
"Duck and peas?" "I can't digest, sir"—
"Puff, sir?" "Stuff, sir!" "Fish, sir?" "Pish, sir!"
"Sausage?" "Sooner eat the dish, sir"—
"Shrimps, sir? prawns, sir? craw-fish? winkle?
Scallops ready in a twinkle.
Wilks and cockles, crabs to follow!"
"Heavens, *nothing* I can swallow!"
"WAITER!!"
"Yes—sar."
"Bread for twenty—
I shall starve in the midst of plenty!"

What a lurid lustre does the backward light of memory shed over the dyspeptic's past in the majestic realms of the commissariat! He had evidently lived "not wisely but too well," and he sighed for

A vanished digestive power
Unvexed by a doctor's bill!

On perusing these artless lines the thoughtful mind is penetrated with surprise at the grave problem of what we eat thoughtlessly. For myself, I must confess that at present, with the possible exception of the minor shell-fish, I enjoy all of the gastronomic objects so touchingly set forth by the waiter. What the future will bring in its train of advancing years I know not; I am prepared with Herrick to gather rose-buds while I may, though in a somewhat different sphere from the one which he had in view when he offered his perhaps sound but still Epicurean advice.

But to return to our poet. Most human creatures with some of the lower animals have suffered and will continue to suffer from the stuffy martyrdom of a cold in the head. As far as I know, Thomas Ingoldsby is the only one who has immortalised that "Nasty Tom-cat with a cold in his head," while Puck alone has attempted to do the like for suffering humanity. He essays his lofty theme with much success: with his feet in mustard and water, a candle intermittently applied to his proboscis and a basin of odorous and odious gruel, he teaches the lesson "How you speak through your dose." He says with a faulty intonation wholly beyond his power to correct:—

O doe, doe!

I shall dever see her bore!

Deverbore our feet shall rove

The beadows as of yore!

Deverbore with byrtle boughs

Her tresses I shall twide—

Deverbore her bellow voice

Bake bellody with bide!

Dever shall we lidger bore

Abid the flowers at dood,

Dever shall we gaze at dight

Upod the tedter bood!

Ho, doe, doe!

Those berry tibes have flowd,

Ad I shall dever see her bore,

By beautiful! by owd!

Ho, doe, doe!
 I shall dever see her bore!
 She will forget be id a bonth
 Bost probably before).
 She will forget the byrtle boughs,
 The flowers we plucked at dood,
 Our beetigs by the tedter stars,
 Our gazigs od the bood.
 Ad I shall dever see agaid
 The lily ad the rose;
 The dabask cheek! the sdowy brow!
 The perfect bouth ad dose!
 Ho, doe, doe!
 Those berry tibes have flowd—
 Ad I shall dever see her bore,
 By beautiful!! by owd!!

Herein is a truthful picture of the results of wandering "bedeath the bood" with faithless fair ones, but without an overcoat. The fair one might well be excused from wandering with a swain suffering from a cold in the head, the most inconvenient of ailments under such circumstances. As far as I am aware, no other poet has turned his nasal agonies into English verse. Those who have suffered either from that unpleasant sickness or from the severer chill of rejection, will admit that both the substance and style of the lover's complaints are equally suitable to either. These and the foregoing lines on the dyspeptic contain an abundance of blithe mischief, but no drop of ill-nature. The happy sprite's laughter is sympathetic and such as can be enjoyed without any qualm.

Many more of Puck's songs are worth singing once at least, while some deserve an *encore*: but I must resist the temptation to cull more flowers of artless fun from the first volume and proceed to bind a little garland of occasional verse from the second. It is entitled "Pegasus Re-saddled": less witty than its predecessor, its lines run as smoothly, while its subjects are all charming. I have used this hackneyed epithet already, because it was

strictly applicable, as it is to the verses of the sequel. Some of these are touched with the tenderness of deep feeling, while the rest form one of the happiest collections of "occasional verse" in our literature. If there be nothing deep in the lines, there is a light and refreshing ripple running through them with a sparkle as piquant as it is pretty.

The varieties of what the author designates "*casus spooni*" are infinite; there is indeed a marked similarity in all of them; for the vocabulary of love-making is tautological and delights like the heathen "in vain repetitions." Still its ever-varying similarity is interesting, as are all the vagaries of young engaged couples, or couples shortly to be engaged. It seems natural for them to be fondly foolish, though they excite a wondering curiosity in those who have passed through that season of sapient silliness, no less than in those whose pleasure of this species is still to come. However that may be, all who have any loving memories of those dear, old, foolish times and all who have aspirations in that direction, can hardly choose but smile at our poet's portrayal of one such "Case of Spoons."

(He). I wonder why to sit I find it sweet,
As if you were Gamaliel, at your feet?
They're quite too small to be of any use!

(She). Because you are a goose.

(He). I wonder, when your glances downward stray,
Why mine look up until you turn away—
You hate the sight of me, I dare assert!

(She). Because I hate a flirt.

(He). Then tell me why, when you attempt to speak,
I find my ear gets closer to your cheek,
Until it almost touches someone's locks—

(She). Because it wants a box!

Along with the amorous swain a sense of wonder steals
upon me: why, O why, do gentle maidens when they are

suffering from "love's pretty fever," so frequently say what they do not mean? But to leave that problem unsolved, the little poem is dainty and delicate: whether it reminds us of the past or suggests the immediate future, it is altogether very guileless and what is more it is true to the life.

Another piece treats of "Rinking Reminiscences," which was penned at the height of the *Rinkomania* of a former generation and is not inappropriate now, when that madness of our forbears has experienced a temporary resuscitation. Then as now the dangerous diversion was a well-known means of bringing together eligible couples, while even the stern "masculine parent," intent on sentry-duty, deigned to uplift the soles of his feet to the ceiling on many an evening with this desirable object before his mind. Our poet with much insight sets forth a young lady's initiation, perseverance, tumbles usually upon gentlemen, and final success. She says:—

Yes, it's awfully nice, and all that sort of thing,
 But please take me back to a seat,—
 Your intentions are excellent, Guy, I am sure,
 But oh! may you never be forced to endure
 The anguish I feel in my feet!

These straps are too tight—or the wheels don't go right,—
 And my ankles have taken a twist,—
 I've tumbled at least twenty times on my arm,
 And Bella just gave me a terrible qualm—
 She fancies I've broken my wrist.

Old Buffers has knocked me down flat on my face
 And poked in my eye his cigar,—
 Young Perkins pursues me wherever I go,
 And 'cannons'—he does it on purpose I know,
 For he never 'collides' with Papa.

Bumped, battered and bruised, kicked, cuffed and ill-used,
 I'm a 'figure for *Fun*,' or for *Punch*,—

So now that you've taken my skates off, dear Guy,
 And I feel less immediately likely to die,
 We'll adjourn—*au revoir*, after lunch.

Truly the foregoing is a happy description of an unhappy sufferer, who in spite of her tumbles is ready like Bruce's spider and like Bruce himself to try again. Such have always been the appearances, disappearances and experiences of a young lady during her first days of "roller-skating." Many downfalls, more collisions must she endure with such philosophy as she can muster. But when *rink* may be changed into *ring* there is a possible consolation, which outweighs the bumps and bangs and involuntary embraces so bravely borne on unyielding concrete floors.

From concrete and rollers to steel slides and ice is a natural and easy transition dependent chiefly upon climatic changes. Few more exact or lively descriptions of the difficulties of wooing Jack Frost have been penned than "May-fair upon Skates." Our chronicler is not conventional in his rhythm, any more than inexperienced skaters are conventional in their attitudes and their movements. But if some of his lines have more feet than legs, they at least represent faithfully a young lady's language under those trying circumstances, when feet, legs and bodies appear to move in different orbits. At the risk of being thought tedious I cannot refrain from quoting the verses in full, in spite of their Whitmanesque character. The dainty damosel begins thus:—

(*Recitative. Allegro.*)

"Do you think the ice is safe, Mr. Beard? I'm sure I shall never be able to stand—

A chair? (he wants to put me off with a chair!) thank you, but I think I should prefer a hand . . .

Oh, please don't let me go! I shall fall—I know I shall—I feel I *must*—O dear!

I told you so! and, Mr. Beard, I'm so ashamed, I really didn't mean to pull your hair!"

PUFFS FROM MY PIPE

CHORUS.

For here we fall
And there we sprawl,—
This bumping is pernicious;
Yet Charley swears
And Blanche declares,
That skating is delicious!

"Thank you so much—I hope I've not tired you . . . light, am I? I'm sure I feel like lead;
(It's very kind of him to say he's not a bit tired, but he looks half-dead)—
Getting on awfully fast? Yes, dreadfully! I feel I couldn't stop to save my life—
And here's Lord Dash towing Lady D. backwards like a lightning conductor, or a pilot-engine with a wife—
He'll be over us in half a minute! Can't somebody manage to catch me? Ada, elf!
Was there ever? . . . hurt myself, did you say, sir? No, sir, I did *not* hurt *myself*! . . .
He'll scatter someone else directly—look, I told you so—there's Constance down and there goes Fanny Flop,
And Katy, and Ada with her 'ice wings,' and the three Miss Maypoles, and huge Mrs. MacAnak at the top:
Why can't the man look where he's going to, or skate forwards like other people, I should like to know?
He's bowling them over like ninepins, and oh, hurrah! I declare he's bowled *himself* over at last into a great heap of snow!

CHORUS.

For here we slip
And there we trip
In moments too ambitious;
Yet Blanche declares
And Charley swears
That skating's quite delicious!

"The Lancers? What on skates? Of all things! wouldn't it be jolly?
Richard can dance with me, and I'll introduce you to my country Cousin Polly;—

Rather have me? No, would you? I thought you'd like better to have danced with her;
 Only Polly always goes wrong in the Grand Chain and Dick systematically refuses to stir
 Can't somebody *whistle*? They'll never get on like this—
 but we'll finish it in spite of spite,—
 What's stopping us now? Oh it's the girl with the pretty feet wanting her skate-straps put to rights?
 And pray what are *you* about, sir? New Lancer-step? Nonsense, it's nothing of the sort, I know,
 It's spread 'addle,' or 'eagle,' or something, but you've fairly settled the 'set,' and I believe it's what you wanted to do,
 So we'll go back and cut some 'eights,' shall we? or 'threes back'? (Yes I know your stupid joke about my 'backward roll'),
 Or make a voyage of discovery to the furthest ice, like Captain Cook or Franklyn, when they got to the top of the North Pole! "

CHORUS.

For here we slide
 And there we glide,
 Though Ma may look suspicious;
 A fall or two
 Don't matter a *sou*,
 And skating is delicious! "

I have quoted this poetic sketch in full, because I know of no more telling description of skating put into the mouth of a dainty damosel. Though it is a *recitative* in monologue, the attentive reader can catch the fatuous remarks politely whispered by the attendant swain from the sparkling answers given to them. I do not wonder that the author desired his lines to be chanted *allegro*. Such a time suits alike their theme and their character. The pleasures of skating are manifold to the experienced, less positive to the learner who soon finds with Mr. Winkle that "ice is very slippery" and equilibrium upon skates is a fine art not acquired in a moment. We can but admire the persistence of the fair one, which perhaps is not

wholly unintelligible, when we remember that she had a suitable partner to fall back upon and to assist her when she fell. It may be noted in passing that firm and solid ice, cold as it is in itself, is marvellously effective in thawing the less real ice of bashfulness, which strives to part the sexes, when they have reached a marriageable age. Hence, though "Ma may look suspicious," as our heroine admits, she is inwardly blessing the matrimonial ministrations of ice-crowned King Winter.

"Pegasus Re-saddled" takes Puck through varying episodes of human life, showing for the most part a marked preference for the lighter kind. His rider has a nice skill in parody, an excellent ear for rhythm, a judicious sense of humour and a neat wit. Some of his verses betray considerable powers of observation of the superficial sort and a guileless mock-innocent manner of recording their results. In the midst of his humorous pieces are lines and stanzas of much poetic beauty and bearing some resemblance to Thackeray's efforts in this order. He is not simply a caricaturist, certainly not a caricaturist of the Max Beerbohm type, much of the humour of whose pictures seems to me to consist in unpicturesque though very funny exaggeration. Our author has always a tone of delicate refinement in his songs, which cannot fail to appeal to the more fastidious of his readers. He is seldom content with the merely obvious, but revels in the unforeseen. I am not contending that he is an example of poetic profundity. But surely it is pleasant sometimes to paddle in the surf of the sea of literature without always longing to dive into its "vasty deeps" with a not unreasonable doubt as to the possibility of coming up alive. For myself I have "a liking old" for these lighter singers of an idle hour, in whose merry company it is my delight to spend some of life's fast-flying moments.

Cholmondley Pennell is not merely skilful in verse of this kind, not merely the clever exponent of the "fluid

patter" of young ladies just come out, not merely the author of two stately tomes on "Fishes and Fishing." At times he is something more than the waggish weaver of witty trifles. Like most of such jovial spirits he has an artless pathos of his own, which appeals straight to the heart. He has no gall in his composition: from his own good-humoured laughing eyes he looks out upon the world, as he pours out his gentle ridicule upon its follies, while the world cannot choose but smile back at him with a cheerful and kindly glance. He can see the foolishness of other people; but knowing well that he himself has his touch of kindred foolishness, he laughs lovingly at his brothers and sisters. What is more, his laughter is so genial, so heart-whole, that it can wound none save the purblind victims of supercilious self-conceit. On all occasions a friend to domestic animals, he has expressed the feelings of many a true sportsman in his touching little epitaph on "Pincher," a dog, who had accompanied him on many of his rambles in search of game. He says:—

Farewell—sleep soft! whilst over mosses grow,
Kindest of all thy race was ever seen!
Some tears are thine, some drops of long adieu
From hearts where still thy memory shall be green.

Farewell! but oh! how often didst thou lay
A soft head and brown eyes upon my breast
Nestling, and sighing deep, as if to say,
'I love you, love you, master, think the rest!'

Companion both and terror of my gun,
Who all inapt, yet ardent for the chase,
Plunged in the crackling marsh when snipe was down,
Spurred by ambitions alien to thy race;

Or else, when bluebells rang through woods of May,
Girt by the winding stream where alders nod,
How wouldst thou drive the amphibious foe to bay
Dripping and panting like a river-god.

Farewell! farewell! and yet one last caress,
Old comrade, friend, for truer ne'er can be;
Whose faults were only virtues in excess,
Whose virtues faultless—there's a star for thee.

Here a true poet peeps forth from behind the comedian's mask, showing how closely akin are laughter and tears. Cholmondley Pennell has a dainty sweetness of thought and a loyal tenderness of heart, a simplicity of humour and a keenly perceptive wit, which make me for one regret that he has written so little in this vein. But the two little volumes, of which I have treated, are among the treasured companions of my specially Nicotian hours, when my brain is weary of profounder literature. It seems a pity that they should have passed so completely from the minds of this fussy generation of ours, which is busied perhaps with less simple problems, which certainly revels in wit of a less harmless kind. Physical science has invaded the sacred realm of literature; social economics, which are best studied in text-books, have become the unsuitable theme of our fiction and our drama. If for no other reason save to refresh the problem-jaded mind, the lighter verse once well known and highly appreciated should not be suffered to sink into the eternal bathos of oblivion.

I began with a prologue and must needs end with an epilogue. Taking two worn little volumes from my shelves I have ventured to introduce new friends to some, to recall forgotten friends to others. Bright, cheerful and happy comrades are they, who can smoke a pipe and sing their song. If they do not soar aloft to empyrean heights, what then? Icarus strove to reach heaven "on pinions not given to man," and sank into the sea, which was long called by his unhappy name. Browning in "*Sordello*," Goethe in the "*Second Part of Faust*," and Jean Paul Richter almost always, achieved a flight so adventurous, that they took up their meaning with them into the clouds of unintelligibility. It is wise to keep our feet firmly planted on the earth sometimes and to look round

about us with cheerful eyes. Upon occasion no doubt we shall do well to partake of the heavenly banquet of nectar and ambrosia. Still a mortal dinner in suitable company is not to be despised. It may seem that I have had nought to offer save very small beer. But even small beer has its uses: it foams and twinkles in the glass with an inviting amber, and it is uncommonly acceptable after the intellectual intoxication which follows the study of the works of the giants and gods of literature. Nor indeed is there anything else which can exactly fill its place, when we are overcome with thirst. Amid the noise of a panting, breathless and speed-loving generation it is good to turn aside for a moment to listen to the robin's song.

"Puck" is always tuneful, always pleasant, and deserves more attention than it has been his lot to win amongst the jostling crowd of more pretentious and less agreeable performers. It is healthful and helpful to listen to the robins of our choir of poets, to pause in wonder at the variety and range of our English literature. The blithe, gay, mirthful verse, of which I have culled a few examples from rarely read books, is one of the surest antidotes to melancholy and a mortal foe to worry. With one final remark I lay down my pipe and my subject: he who is free from melancholy and does not waste his life in worry, has found the four-leaved clover, which will open to him the fairy palace of happiness.

"COSAS DE ESPAÑA."

By GEORGE S. LANCASHIRE.

TO those who have succumbed to the spell of Spain and Spanish life the words "Cosas de España," the Things of Spain, conjure up a wealth of memories which stir at the very sound and then dissolve into the mists of recollection. The click of the castanet, the strumming of the guitar and that rough sweep of the hard brown fingers over the jarring strings, once heard, accompanied by an Andalusian dancer, remains a persistent and delightful memory—a memory as pleasurable and exciting as the dancing of a Pavlova. It recalls the Coplas yet sung at the village feasts in the cool of a summer's evening—those verses whose theme is principally love, though they reflect also the varying moods of the Spanish people, and bring with them as it were an echo from the sunlit plains and mountain villages of España. It recaptures a mood of oblivion, of infinite content, filling long hours of treasured experience.

"Things of Spain" is a phrase which expresses anything thoroughly national, contradictory or paradoxical, in short it is a characteristic of Spain, it explains everything inexplicable. It may be too comprehensive, but it is not for a stranger to say.

Yet let it not be thought that we regard the Spaniards as one people, only in a political sense can they be so regarded, for the inhabitants vary as much as the land in which they live, from the brave, sober, industrious Asturian to the passionate, gay and idle Andalusian. But it is the latter who captures our hearts, for the spirit of poetry has not yet departed from him, he is the brightest figure of the nation. he leads an almost butterfly existence,



SPANISH GIPSY: GRANADA.

From a photograph.

he gives no thought for the morrow, sufficient unto the day is the pleasure thereof. So to Andalusia will we go for our Cosas de España.

The diligence was due to leave at four in the morning and we made our way through the narrow streets. With unusual promptness we left Granada at 4.30, the stage rattling through the deserted streets with a noise that might wake every sleeper near by. We were a silent company in the coach for a few miles.

Our companions were polluting the air with breath-laden garlic, which to our unaccustomed olfactory senses was almost overpowering. We were fortunately next the door and thus could revive ourselves from time to time with draughts of fresh air. With the approach of day we were all more communicative, and after discovering our nationality one passenger said to me, "Is England to the East or West of here?" They had the vaguest ideas in what portion of the globe England was situated. "To the North." "London is a big town, three or four times bigger than Granada?" "Si, Señor, fifty times bigger." "You are pulling my leg." This was his meaning, but he expressed himself in a fashion piquant and racy of the soil. One of the company had worked in Glasgow for a few months on the strength of which he posed as an authority on our country.

"The English gentleman was certainly exaggerating, it might be ten times larger."

I was humiliated, I had damaged England's reputation for truthfulness, for my word was as nothing against that of a countryman of their own. For some time he held the conversation, relating Munchausen-like experiences of life here. When his imaginative vein was exhausted, I again became the object of attention. I was cross-examined as to my business. I admitted to being interested in fruit. Their interest was now actively aroused. Here was a pigeon ready at hand to be plucked.

It is of no moment here to relate the excitement that

reigned, the questions thrown at me, the alluring prospects of untold wealth that lay before me did I but accept their ideas and proposals.

I explained the difference between my position and that of a Fruit Broker, which was further amplified by the native man of travel in such a way that I at once became a person of no importance to them. I was so ignored that at the first stop I suggested to my companion that we should join the driver on the box-seat.

It was an interesting change. The driving of the mules must be quite a science of itself, not in the handling of the reins one would gather, but rather in the tones and modulations of the voice in addressing the animals. There were nine of them and to reach the foremost the "mayoral" or driver, flung stones at it to urge it on. Each mule had its name, a good long sounding one, and was addressed as "'Arré,' Gee up, Mariquita-a, Generala-a," and if the pace was not quickened the "zagal," the man who runs alongside them almost the whole time, uses his stick vigorously, at the same time shouting unhandsome allusions to their mothers. All the mules seemed to know their names; after one is addressed the next one to it is "à la otrâ" the other one, which was a recognisable sign. Then his language is so racy, for none can compare with a Spanish diligence driver in the knowledge and use of vituperative words. It is not a mere reiteration of one or two ugly sounding words but a steady, copious flow of oaths which, however they may offend the ears of the sensitive native, to a stranger seem a phrase of musical sound.

It was the rainy season, roads were bad and rivers swollen; once we were stuck in a river bed and the animals were beaten unmercifully, for there is no reason like that of the stick, they say, for children or for mules. The scenery was magnificent, disclosing constantly new snow-fields in the Sierra Nevada. We reached our first halting place in fine style, descending a hill, at the bottom of

which we rushed across a wide but shallow river, to stop at the opposite bank at a huge barn-like structure. Inside this barn was a scene which must have been common when the sturdy knight, Don Quixote, and his squire roamed in search of adventures. The room, or rather great stable, was imperfectly lighted to keep it cool, so that even by day the eye had some difficulty at first in making out the details. It seemed to be a sort of common room for beasts and men. In the centre was a fire the smoke from which ascended to a hole in the roof, and over the fire was a huge cauldron, whilst squatted round it were from ten to a dozen muleteers. It was a picturesque group, the men with their waists girt with red sashes, gay-coloured silk handkerchiefs on their heads, and some with their cigarettes burnt out in their lips as if they had been part of their system at birth.

We enter the room with a "Buenos Dias, Caballeros," and are made welcome with that good breeding inherent in the Spanish peasant, and the best place by the fire is offered to us.

Nothing succeeds like courtesy and a few cigars, especially in these country districts where every man is considered equal, and where the native does not accept the delusion that a man's wealth consists in the abundance of his possessions. Of all men these peasants show they are entitled to courtesy for they know how to return it. Round the room stretched on stone slabs lay men fast asleep, their pillows being composed of the saddle-bags and their cloaks round them as a covering. They were undisturbed by the occasional loud and animated conversation of their comrades round the fire, who were discussing a political crisis of the moment. They slept soundly through it all, spite of their hard pallet; fresh air and hard work had given a zest beyond the reach of art.

"Blessings," said Sancho, "on the man who invented sleep," besides is it not well known that "he who sleeps well will not be bitten by fleas?"

The smack of antiquity gave such a relish to this scene,

a scene so mediæval that if Don Quixote had come along he would hardly have caused surprise, that I was quite heedless of the conversation till I was awakened from my reverie by the usual question being put to me concerning my nationality. "Gracias á Dios, I am an Englishman." Why I thanked the Lord for this accident of birth I know not, for at that moment I was saturated with Spain and Spanish life; perhaps it was that unconscious pride we have in inherent gifts unacquired by effort or thought. With a candour unusual in our city life came the remark that "all the English are big tall men."

There was a laugh as I explained there were a few exceptions, but the laughter made us comrades for the too brief minutes of my stay, especially after I had related the old story of the angel granting the visitor from Spain all he desired for his country except good government. I was besieged with questions about my opinion of their country, and I answered them as they wished. I was sincere in my flattery. Spain as a second-hand copy of English bustle and progress is not an attractive subject.

With a "God go with you" ringing in my ears I mounted the diligence and set off again on the journey. We were going through a weird and wild part of Spain. The hills were bare of vegetation, and the swollen rivers in the centuries past had washed out the yellow soil into cañons and strikingly peculiar formations. The hillsides were densely covered with cheerless mud homes. Many of them were mere caves dug in the mud-coloured cliffs, some being on a level with the ground and some further up the almost perpendicular hillside.

The formation of the ground permitted some of them to dig rooms of two stories and with a chimney on the top. I remember on the return journey we stopped at one of these caves and the company, about eight of us, had each a glass of wine, for which in payment one handed the woman a peseta.

We noticed her looking at the coin very intently, after which she handed it back stating she desired coppers, for she had not seen before a silver coin and did not know its value. Poverty is but of relative significance. This woman was not aware of the value of silver, she was satisfied with a few coppers for her wine. She had a comfortable little cave and was apparently well nourished, yet with the full knowledge of the wretchedness in our midst we talk of the poverty of Spain.

We reached our destination in the late afternoon, a nine hours' journey full of interest, not by reason of scenic beauty, but by the intercourse with a peasantry who have much to teach us in the art of living. The peasant's childlike simplicity, his sententiousness, his belief in the greatness of his country, which means his own province, is a never ending delight. He still remains uncivilised and unspoiled, a child in things we think all important, for in these mountain villages he has changed but little his ancient manner of life.

A railway now connects these two towns and the distinctive traits of the peasants will doubtless be moulded into the one commonplace type which pseudo-progress seems to carry with it. Ay de mi, España!

For months it had not rained in Ronda. Day after day the pitiless sun had poured down its unappreciated rays from the steely cloudless sky. The river that flowed at the bottom of that awe-inspiring cleft in the earth on both sides of which stands the old semi-moorish town, had dwindled to a trickling streamlet. The earth was parched and the hard soil was cracking for lack of moisture. Our feet made music as we walked along in the dust and leaves that had fallen ere they had scarce reached maturity. Life animate and inanimate seemed exhausted. The church was crowded with a devout peasantry silently offering up their prayers to the All-powerful who chastens whom He cares for, and to appease His wrath they had

brought their offerings of flowers and fruit which were placed on the altar, and the pictures and the effigies of their saints.

For the first time for thirty years the image of their patron saint had been carried aloft on men's shoulders through the streets, and as the procession passed some of the people crossed themselves and fell upon their knees. Thus did they testify to their belief, for with these villagers religion seemed a human passion.

The next day, whilst I was waiting at the station, the air became close, heavy clouds massed themselves from the west, a slight wind rustled and stirred the parched and thirsty leaves of the trees, and the burnt brown soil received the blessings of heaven from those refreshing clouds. The joy of the people was manifest both at the sight of the rain and at the successful intercession of their saint. There was a worldly touch of local pride in the native's voice when he indicated to me later, in the train, that it was in the Ronda district alone that the rain had fallen.

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The railway station was filled with a crowd of olive-coloured men in tight-fitting trousers, low broad-brimmed hats, and nearly all with red sashes round their waists.

They were occupying their time whilst waiting for the train in chattering and strolling up and down, with interludes of gazing openly at the passing women who apparently did not resent the stare, but returned it with full interest after the manner of the sex here, who take such notice as a compliment.

The ladies were not dressed like Sevillanas on feast days (with bright coloured shawls, mantillas and red roses in the hair, which the artists would make us believe is their everyday attire) but in dresses of sombre hues and hats of familiar style and shape though somewhat belated in fashion, for the arms of the Paris fashion maker stretch

even to these out of the way places to tear out the ancient taste and make all of one monotonous type. The platform was strewn untidily with bundles of all kinds, wooden trunks with wall paper coverings, well corded, for you must cord the luggage as the devil is always spying, hairy cowskin portmanteaus and cotton umbrellas, a visible result as it were of a hasty village eviction.

In the countries of the sun life at a railway station is ever interesting. The waiting for an unpunctual train is an interval of rest and recreation, and however long may be the delay signs of impatience are rarely seen. The railway system is not part of their life as it is of ours, it is a thing apart, a convenience not for saving time but for ease in reaching the destination. Besides the railway station fulfils other functions. It serves as a waiting room for patients to meet their doctor. I once had as a companion on a journey a Spanish doctor, and at almost every station his patients were there to meet him. He gave them a cursory examination, a few words of advice, sometimes a bottle.

As the train passed through village and town the names of which were redolent of heroism and deeds of chivalry in the long protracted struggle of Moor and Christian in this land of all lands, maybe the most romantic, I would now and then take up my book to refresh my memory. "Tenga la bondad, Señor," "Have the kindness Sir to read what your book says of my native town, Ronda," and as I read the glowing description of the grandeur of its position, the bravery of its inhabitants and its historic associations the naive delight of the doctor was almost a compensation in itself for the hours spent in the study of the language.

The charm of these railway stations is to notice that the Southerner can occupy his idleness, an art we have lost. And what better chance to observe the ways of the people than a busy meeting place, such as is the station, and to enjoy it to the full is to fall in with their view that nothing is interesting but life itself.

At length clanging and rattling the train came in, there was bustle for a few minutes, the men clambering first the steep steps from the ground platform, helping up the women afterwards. The last to enter were the two Civil Guards without whom no train leaves.

Urchins climb to the windows and whine for coppers, curse if you refuse them, women offer their fruit for sale, while the station master having got his flock safe in the carriages occupies his well-earned rest by gossiping with the driver. There is no hurry, tyrant Time has not yet made the Spaniard his slave. Having brought with us false ideas of comfort and class distinction we sat alone in a be-cushioned carriage forgetful that the charm of travelling in this wild land is cheaply purchased by trifling inconveniences, and it was a poor compensation for the hard seats of a third-class compartment where the company usually is excellent and manners free and delightful, and where a constant series of novel pictures of manners and customs is presented to the traveller. At last the two officials have settled the affairs of state to their satisfaction, and so the train with a puffing, a jangling and banging of doors slowly leaves the station.

It is an express train; we travel at the rate of thirty miles an hour to the accompaniment of creaking wheels and jarring sounds. As we pass a village and draw up at a little wayside station a sound of lamentation rose and filled the air. It was an almost Arab wail. A crowd blocked all the place and it was divided into two distinct segments as if composed of followers of rival political chiefs. Old men and old women, youths and children were embracing and weeping upon each other's breasts after the fashion of their Eastern forbears, and quite as naturally keeping up the while this weird sounding wail. It was a sight that could only be found amongst a peasantry unsullied by the touch of so-called education and progress, and a people of simplicity and intensity of feeling.

Some years before I had witnessed at a little station in

the cork district of Andalusia a similar outburst of emotion on the occasion of an English manager leaving a village. His friends were as boisterous as a body of wild schoolboys, but with it all there was a certain innate dignity; it seemed a natural expression of their affection for him and they were not ashamed to manifest it.

The humanity of the Spaniard towards his own friends or to his own village has been noted by many, but at his village his humanity ends, for none is so insular as the Spaniard, his love is entirely parochial.

But to return to the semi-Oriental scene that was being enacted before our eyes.

As the train stopped a few youths dragged themselves from their distracted relatives who held them, some their hands, some the lappels of their coats, and they entered the carriages. They were going to the unexplored world some forty or fifty miles away, but it seemed to us sophisticated Northerners as if they were taking a lasting farewell. They were the luckless ones who had drawn the fated numbers of the conscripts' roll. The hand-shaking and the embracing were so great that the train was delayed. A universal sob shook the whole crowd as the porter clanged upon the bell. The feeble horn was blown, the engine began to puff and snort and with a rattling of the couplings the train slowly moved out of the station.

We noticed one youth on the step still clinging and talking to his brother in the carriage in spite of warning cries. The speed became greater and still greater, yet the lad seemed oblivious of the moving train; towards the end of three to four minutes the guard walked along the step and at his angry call the lad calmly dropped off only to fall down a steep and rocky ravine. It seemed to us helpless onlookers of this pitiful tragedy that his neck was broken at the first fall and as the body rolled down from rock to rock its movements confirmed this fear. The Civil Guards immediately fired their revolvers as a signal to stop the train. This peremptory signal was reluctantly obeyed, and

when at length the train came to a standstill there was a leisurely consultation.

Surely it needed not all these words; feelings of humanity urged but one course, the railway line would be clear for some hours, they would return and render any help necessary, but no, they proceeded on their way as if nought had happened.

Into every door sorrow and death must enter, but this attitude of the Spaniard, his hardness and indifference to death and, on the other hand, the tender feelings of human relationship witnessed at the station, seemed so contradictory that one almost wondered afterwards whether the scene had been real or but an emanation of the mind.

But it remains a disconcerting and sad recollection, and the most persistent and permanent of my memories is that of those primitive peasants in the sun-dried village whence the tide of life had receded, bidding farewell to their sons who were going to be taught to fight for their country which to them was but a name—and the parting that was turned into a tragedy.

SELECTIONS FROM A BOOK OF TABLE TALK.

By GEORGE MILNER.

The Nature of the Ballad.

The true lyric is the expression of individual sentiment, or at most the allusive treatment of personal experience. The ballad always involves an objective story. It runs on the side of the epic and the dramatic, though taking lyrical form. Above all it keeps wide of the didactic. The introduction of this latter element always indicates decadence or spurious imitation.

The ballad has been popular in England by reason of two things—our love of freedom and of the open air. The Robin Hood Ballads, especially, lend themselves to these two characteristics.

The Englishman combines in a singular degree the aspiration after personal freedom with a respect for law. He hates all tyranny, but in the last resort he will submit to lawful and reasonable authority. As to the open-air, the more you impound him in cities the more he yearns for the pleasures of the country and the solace of the garden.

Amateur and Artist.

The work of the amateur is a more obvious self-revelation than that of the artist. It is also usually a clearer indication of the aspiration and effort after the delineation of beauty for its own sake.

This is so because what are called technique and the methods of the schools tend to obscure these things. The worst work is always produced when the amateur, lacking

the thorough training of the artist, endeavours to emulate the methods and to reproduce the effects of the latter. The fine amateur work of John Ruskin, in its excellencies and in its shortcomings, illustrates this contention.

The Idylls of the King.

In the "Idylls" there is the material for an epic; and that material might have been so arranged. Tennyson chose to cast it in the form which he calls an idyll because he saw that the men and women for whom he wrote were out of harmony with the epic form. The idyll gave him greater freedom of language and illustration. The "Idylls" are not in the foremost rank of poetry, neither are they in the third rank, as has been said. They contain much pure poetry and pure morality,—teaching of the most noble and manly kind. Too much stress should not be laid on the allegory in the "Idylls,"—Tennyson himself has only alluded to it in the slightest manner. I do not think it was in his mind at first. There is no trace of it in the germ of the series, the "Morte d'Arthur." But probably he saw afterwards how the legend would suit the allegorical meaning, and it does certainly fall into such a meaning with wonderful facility. Take, for instance, the death of Arthur and his expected reappearance as allegorical of the soul's failure here, but final triumph hereafter.

There are passages in the "Idylls," for instance, the Death of Guinevere, which as poetry, are in the very foremost rank.

Poetical narrative may be treated in three ways,—the epic manner, the romance manner, and the manner of the idyll. Milton used the first, Byron and Scott the second, Tennyson and William Morris the third.

It helps us to get at the position of the "Idylls" if we ask—What narrative poems stand higher than they do, and what poems, after the "Paradise Lost," come so near to being national epics?

Imagination.

Imagination is the power to shape an image or whole thing out of many parts in such a way as to give it a harmonious power of life. It is presentation of coherent and harmonious, though complex ideas. It is the highest of all mental power. Being synthetic, it includes the analytic, because you cannot combine that which you have not the power to conceive separately or analytically.

Walt Whitman.

These are not poems in any true sense, but only material—albeit material of the finest kind—out of which poems might be made; lumps of clay, so to speak, unfashioned on the wheel, without form and void.

Precipices of Thought.

I have shuddered on many a precipice among the mountains, looking down into some vast hollow filled with surging mist and falling streams, but have never on such occasions experienced so acute a sensation of terror as when pursuing some of those ways which lead to the dizzy precipices of thought from which we look down on the "abysmal depths of personality," or upward into the seeming void which we know involves or embraces the idea of God.

The Infinite.

Some philosophers put the infinite and unknowable in antagonism to the visible world. I find that only through and by the help of the visible creation can I reach the Infinite, or approach the Infinite, or preserve my faith in the Infinite.

Amiel's Journal.

I have been reading again Mrs. Humphrey Ward's translation of Amiel's Journal. The book abounds in noble thoughts and in intellectual entertainment, but the

total effect is morbid and unhealthy. Torturing self-consciousness, restless self-investigation, want of purpose, instability of will, an overstrained sentimentality, a desire to become *universal*, which results in painful feebleness and indecision, are its characteristics. It is the spectacle of a puny creature trying to emulate the nature of a God.

Golden Rules.

Those who would keep their lives sweet and healthy, and preserve in advancing age any youthfulness of spirit must observe three golden rules—Grasp the Present decisively; Brood not on the Past, for all reverie should have its severe limitations; and, Be ever hopefully looking forward to some kind of Future. Without this last putrescence is inevitable.

Work.

To many men an ideal condition is this—a good mountain of work before them, work which they feel able to do, which is worth doing, which must be done; but which need not be done in a hurry. The absence of the last provision will spoil all.

Contentment.

The pressure of the world's trouble may be minimised, and peace of mind increased, by certain simple considerations. For instance, you say to yourself—"Regard the working-day as a time fore-ordained to unceasing labour, to harassing worry, even to mortification and disappointment. Expect nothing more from it. Be thankful if it be not so bad, and look forward to the evening when escape will come with rest, with recreation, or, as is more probable, with change to some form of employment which is not accompanied by the distressing conditions of the day's labour.

And this may be done from day to day, and from month to month, looking forward in the same spirit from one

holiday to another, and saying—"Now you have had your holiday be content to endure until your next holiday comes, and make yourself contented and happy in waiting for the emancipation." Taking life in this way by stages and giving to each its proper share of toil or refreshment, it becomes much more endurable.

The same line of argument or reasoning, and the same system of treatment, will apply to the greater spaces of life which we indicate as the temporal and the eternal.

Lewis Morris.

The publication of a new and collected edition of the Poems of Lewis Morris—which, contrary to the generally received opinion, is said to sell in considerable numbers—is leading people to ask why his position in the world of letters is still an ambiguous one. Lewis Morris and Alfred Austin appear to have got into the same disrepute. It has become fashionable for the critics to speak disrespectfully of them—slighting and with banter. The joke about "the other Morris" is always ready, and it is easy to chaff Austin about the Laureateship. The truth is they have both taken themselves too seriously. Lewis Morris has written a great deal and it ought to have made him famous. What then is wanting? More grip, more force, a personal note, some sentiment which is not common to other poets. Instead of this it is always just something which some other poet has done, and often done better. His work is like wine and water. You can taste the wine, it is there, and it is good wine, but the water is in too large a quantity and the result is insipidity. His metre is generally correct, but it is not subtle. In reading his works a suspicion arises that he has been, as we say, on the look out for subjects, and that he has taken this or that theme not because it had any special hold upon him or that he had any special affinity for it but simply because he wanted to turn out some verse and must take up that which came to hand.

Patience.

The heroic virtues are attractive both to the possessor and the observer. But patience is not in the heroic category. It means passive and uncomplaining endurance, not militant activity. It is the service which they render who "only stand and wait." And yet if we desire our own peace, and happiness of those about us, there is no virtue that we should more assiduously cultivate. Suffering and misfortune are made doubly intolerable by the resistance and restlessness of the mind, but the submission of patience always reduces their poignancy and will often entirely remove their sting.

James Smetham.

Smetham was not a great man, but he was original. There have only been two known men in this century of exactly the same sort—F. J. Shields and James Smetham,—men who combine in perfect harmony and without any hint of incongruity or struggle, art in theory and practice, and both at a high and ideal pitch; literature with fullest assimilation and knowledge, if not practice; and religion (also in theory and practice) of the most fervent type.

Dreaming.

Is not much of our dreaming only a kind of other-madness? I cannot distinguish many of my dreams from what would be madness were I awake. Do both arise from the same thing—the withdrawal of the controlling power, whatever that is? When we are awake there is the outside world to check phantasy, and also this said controlling-power which forbids us to entertain or to believe in the delusions which are patent during sleep and under insanity.

Composition.

In composition avoid as much as possible such connect-

ing links as "namely" and "thereby." Under no circumstances can a "viz" be tolerated. "So to speak," "and so forth," and "as much as to say," should also be very charily used. "Etc.," notwithstanding Carlyle's salient example, is barbarous and should be confined to documents of a commercial or formal character.

The Light of the Universe.

One of the most awful and mysterious things to me is the illumination which we are conscious of in the "dead middle" of clear, moonless, winter nights after all terrestrial lights have been extinguished. It is the light of the unfathomable universe which lies beyond our own system. I like to walk alone in such a light and to gauge its quantity and quality.

Phrases.

It is fashionable to deprecate what is called phrase-making—fine phrases we generally call them. Now a phrase, like any other arrangement of syllables, may be mere verbiage, but it may also be the happy embodiment of a pregnant idea, as a proverb is that of an experience.

That the idea should be aptly, or tersely, or pithily put, is no worse for the phrase. What we have to ask is this—is there an idea of value in the phrase, or is it only a striking collocation of words?

A FRIENDLY APOSTROPHE TO WINTER

By CHAS. T. TALLENT-BATEMAN.

I.

HOW oft, O WINTER, to relentless DEATH thou likened
art!

Unjust this is to God; unfair to thee!

For, in Creation's plan and Nature's ordered rule, thy part
Is higher, kindlier than mortality.

The rather would I thee compare to gentle SLEEP—

On whom the burdened frame and wearied limb,
The toiling hand: the head and heart that ache: the eyes
that weep,

May find sweet rest through peaceful Night's quiet
interim;

And thus, refreshed and eased, may be,

'Neath early Morning Sun's exacting rays,

The better fitted for a new Day's needed energy,

And the CREATOR's praise!

II.

The growthful Force of Nature doth *not* die; when, from
their stems,

The fading leaves and bleaching petals fall;

And forest-monarchs lose their Autumn-gilded diadems;

And lands lie buried 'neath thy snowy pall! *

Each tree and plant is but *asleep*; and, when thou dar'st

Relax thy friendly hold, and yield to SPRING

Possession, that same Force is but revealed afresh, as erst

It lived: not new-created, but new-blossoming.

And then we see that Beauty's sheen,

And Nature's life, and Earth's fertility,

Thou hast, in loving arms, conserving and safe-guarding
been!

And we must *honour* thee!

* The "pall" is the (white woollen or ermine) mantle ceremonially worn by the Roman and Frank Emperors, and the Eastern and Roman high ecclesiastics.

